GALIC ANTIQUITIES:

CONSISTING OF

A HISTORY OF THE DRUIDS,

PARTICULARLY OF THOSE OF

CALEDONIA;

A DISSERTATION ON THE AUTHENTICITY

OF THE

POEMS OF OSSIAN;

AND

A COLLECTION OF ANCIENT POEMS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GALIC OF

ULLIN, OSSIAN, ORRAN, &c.

BY JOHN SMITH,

MINISTER AT KILBRANDON, ARGYLESHIRE.

Antiquam exquirite matrem. VIRG.

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MDCCLXXX.

TO THE

NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN

WHO COMPOSE THE

GALIC SOCIETY

IN LONDON,

THE FOLLOWING

PUBLICATION,

INTENDED TO ILLUSTRATE THE ANTIQUITIES OF THEIR COUNTRY,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

EDINBURGH,
March 1. 1780.

JOHN SMITH.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following account of the Druids is, in a great meaſure, derived from remarks made on the remains of ancient cuſtoms and manners in the Highlands, or on ſome expreſſions and idioms ſtill uſed in the Galic language. With theſe, the accounts given of this order by the Greek and Latin writers are compared, ſo as to reflect mutual light on each other, and lead us to a true judgment of the character of the Druids.

The Diſſertation on the Authenticity of Oſſian's Poems is likewiſe derived, in ſome meaſure, from obſervations on the language and cuſtoms of the Highlanders. Theſe obſervations, it is hoped, will corroborate all the weighty arguments offered on this ſubject by the elegant writer of the *Critical Diſſertation*, and by the ingenious author of the *Sketches of Man*.

A particular account of the Collection of Poems is prefixed to them; and many ſpecimens of the original are given in the courſe of the notes. But as the Editor was apprehenſive of encumbering the book with a language which only a few readers would underſtand, theſe ſpecimens are not only contracted, but alſo printed on ſo ſmall a letter, that they muſt appear greatly to the diſadvantage. From theſe, however, ſuch as they are, and from the tranſlation and notes, ſome judgment may be formed of the whole of the Original, of which many requeſt the publication. At their deſire, the tranſlator is ready to prepare it for the preſs, in as correct a form as poſſible, if he is encouraged to it either by ſubſcription or otherwiſe. On a proper type and paper, he ſuppoſes it might make

a volume, that could be furniſhed in boards at ſix ſhillings. Such as may chooſe to favour this undertaking, are requeſted to ſend their ſubſcriptions to Mr ELLIOT in Edinburgh, or Mr CADELL in London, within ſix months. If there is not by that time a ſufficient number to defray the trouble and expence of ſuch a publication, the tranſlator ſhall have at leaſt the ſatisfaction of having done all in his power to preſerve theſe remains of antiquity.—He is ſenſible, that, from the few ſpecimens that are given of the Galic, the tranſlation will appear to ſink far below the beauty and ſublimity of the original. Still, however, he hopes, that it retains many of thoſe charms, which, in their native dreſs, have pleaſed and raviſhed for many centuries. But, whatever reception theſe pieces may meet with from the public in their preſent form, the tranſlator ſhall reckon himſelf much honoured by the approbation and encouragement which ſome of the firſt judges of poetical compoſition have been already pleaſed to beſtow upon them.

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CORRECTIONS.

P. 140. Notes, col. 2. l. 7. For *e'n 'n*, read *e'n*.
P. 242. l. 3. from bottom. For *Hill's left*, read *Hills lift*.
P. 252. Notes, col. 2. l. 1. For *dan fpeur*, read *nan fpeur*.
P. 260. Notes, col. 2. l. 7. For *ann fheilidh*, read *an-fheilidh*.
P. 267. Notes, col. 2. l. penult. For *Mubic*, read *Mhic*.
P. 331. Notes, col. 2. l. 7. from bottom. For *Gealiaich*, read *Gealaich*.

A

HISTORY

OF THE

DRUIDS,

PARTICULARLY OF THOSE OF

CALEDONIA.

CHAP. I.

Of the Eſtabliſhment of the DRUIDS, *and of their different Orders.*

THAT the antiquities of our own country are too much neglected, whilſt thoſe of other nations are eagerly and painfully inquired into, is an evil that has been long and generally complained of. There is nothing, perhaps, in which we have greater reaſon to lament this inattention of antiquaries to our own hiſtory, than in their almoſt total ſilence concerning the Druids. This order of men, if we conſider their antiquity, extent, and duration, with the vaſt authority and learning which they were maſters of, ought to have made a capital figure in the hiſtory of man-

kind. And yet the compaſs of a few pages might include all that is ſaid of them by ancient or modern hiſtorians. As the Celtic philoſophy was one of the parents of the Grecian *, we may judge, from this circumſtance alone, that its profeſſors deſerved a better fate; and may juſtly regret, that more pains have not been taken to reſcue its *Platos* and its *Homers* from that oblivion into which they fell.

THE order of the Druids is now too long extinct to ſpeak of it with all the certainty and preciſion that might be wiſhed for. The hiſtorians of thoſe countries in which it prevailed, did not riſe early enough to mark down any ſketches of this phenomenon, before it diſappeared; and thoſe of other countries ſaw it at too great a diſtance, to make any accurate obſervations upon it. All that they have done ſerves only to excite our curioſity without ſatisfying it, and to make us regret the want of a hiſtory which ſeems to have been replete with inſtruction and entertainment.

NOTWITHSTANDING theſe misfortunes, we have ſtill acceſs to another ſource, from which we may derive, on this head, no inconſiderable degree of information. As the peculiar ſituation of the Highlands of Scotland preſerved them from being ever ſubjugated to any foreign power, they retained their ancient religion in a pure and unadulterated ſtate, longer than any other country around them. The Romans carried their gods as far as they did their eagle; but were not able to extend the one or the other over the mountains of Caledonia. Ever till the introduction of Chriſtianity, theſe retained their religious eſtabliſhment in its primitive ſimplicity. They were ſtrangers to thoſe legions of idols which every

* Diog. Laërt. in procem.

every where elſe had been mixed with it. Here were raiſed to them no altars; here were offered to them no ſacrifices. From theſe circumſtances, and from the language which the Druids ſpoke being ſtill uſed in this country, we may expect to find in its expreſſions and idioms, as well as in the cuſtoms of the people, ſurer traces to guide us to a right notion of the Druidical religion than can be found in the writers of Greece and Rome, who wrote often from prejudice†, or from hearſay, and who, at the beſt, could know but very little of a religion of which the firſt maxim was to conceal its tenets from ſtrangers‡. Of theſe ſketches or outlines, however, which ancient authors have drawn of Druidiſm, though with a light and careleſs pencil, we ſhall retain as many as poſſible, and ſearch the language and cuſtoms of the country for ſome materials which may help to give the piece a more diſtinct colouring.

THE religion of the Druids is allowed to have been of the ſame antiquity with that of the Magi of Perſia, Brachmans of India, and Chaldees of Babylon and Aſſyria*. Between the tenets of all theſe ſects, in their earlieſt and moſt genuine ſtate, there ſeems to have been ſuch conformity as plainly evinces that they all ſprung from the ſame common root, the religion of Noah and of the Antediluvians. Wherever the Celtic tribes, or poſterity of Japhet, migrated, they carried this religion along with them; ſo that it was of the ſame extent with their dominions. According to the loweſt cal-

 culations,

† Vid. int. al. Joſeph. cont. Apion. l. 1.

‡ To this they were bound by oath at their admiſſion, a ceremony common to them with many other ancient ſects. The reader may ſee a curious form of one of theſe oaths recorded by Selden in Proleg. de Dis Syris, and by El. Sched. de Dis Germ. Syntag. 2. c. 16.

* Orig. contr. Celſ. l. 5. Laërt. in procem. Clem. Alex. &c.

culations, theſe reached from the Danube to the Atlantic, and from the Mediterranean to the Baltic ſea †. A more minute diſquiſition into the antiquity and extent of the Druidical religion might lead us too far out of our way, without giving us any proſpect of having theſe points preciſely aſcertained ‡. We ſhall therefore proceed to make ſome obſervations upon that order of men who preſided over this religion, and whoſe hiſtory may give us the cleareſt inſight into that religion which they did profeſs.

THE Druids, who were the prieſts and philoſophers of the Celts, had their name from the word *druidh*, which in their own language ſignifies *wiſe men;* and is ſtill the Galic term for natural philoſophers, or magicians *. It ſeems to have the ſame import with

† Anc. Un. Hiſt. vol. ii. c. 12.

‡ With regard to Cæſar's aſſertion that Druidiſm had its firſt riſe in Britain, it can only be a conjecture founded on the high eſtimation in which the Britiſh Druids were then held, and on the concourſe of diſciples which flocked to them from all quarters, to learn the myſteries of a religion which had retained its purity in Britain longer than any where elſe, as the country was later of being conquered, and did not ſo readily open its boſom to the divinities of the Greeks and Romans. Cæſar might naturally think the religion of Britain to have no extract, when he ſuppoſed its inhabitants to have no origin.

If we could rely on the authority of thoſe who affirm, that the Druids lived in the town of Dreux (or *Druï'ach, the field of the Druids*) in *Chartrain*, as early as the year 410 after the flood, it might bring us very near the æra of its commencement in this iſland. *Ferrar. Lex. Topogr.* in verb. *Dreux*, vel *Drocum.*

Some have alſo ſuppoſed that Orpheus, who ſailed on the Argonautic expedition about the year 1263 before the Chriſtian æra, had acquired ſome of that mythology, which he imported into Greece, from the Britiſh and Gauliſh Druids, as it appears he viſited ſome of theſe countries at that time; unleſs we ſuppoſe with others, that the *Argonautica* were wrote by the later Orpheus of Crotona.

* The common derivation given of *Druid* has been from δρυς *an oak.* This was perhaps a natural thought to ſuch as were better acquainted with the Greek than with the Celtic tongue; but they ſhould conſider, that the Druids had probably their name before the Greek language (of which a part is derived from the Celtic) had exiſted.

with the name of the Eaſtern *Magi*, who, like the Druids and many other religious ſects †, united the character of the philoſopher and the divine, and made both ſciences one and the ſame profeſſion. The religious creed and worſhip of men were, in the firſt ages, ſo ſimple, as to allow the prieſts to turn their chief thoughts to the ſtudy of natural philoſophy, which they always preſſed in to their ſervice, either to promote their own ends, or thoſe of religion.

THE ſect of the Druids was very complex. With that claſs of men who were properly called *Druids*, it alſo comprehended the *Bards*, *Sennachai*, and *Eubages*, who were all ſubject to an *Archdruid*, or ſupreme Pontiff ‡. Theſe different claſſes of the Druidical prieſthood ſeem to have been all ſubordinate to each other, and as it were ſo many gradations by which the Druids aſcended to their eminence of knowledge and authority. In this, as in every other religion, before they could be initiated into the higher myſteries, it was neceſſary to paſs through the other inferior orders, the education of the one ſtill qualifying them for entering into the other. Of theſe ranks the *Eubages*, or *Eubates*, ſeem to have been the loweſt. What this order were, it is difficult preciſely to determine. In hiſtory their character is not diſtinctly marked, and in tradition it is left equally vague. Some have ſuppoſed them to be the ſame with the *Vates* and *Ouates;* which are manifeſtly no more than corruptions of the Celtic *Faidh*, or prophet. But this opinion we have ſome reaſon to doubt. The Greek and Latin writers were too well acquainted with the name and character

† Laërt. Procem. Seg. 1. & 6.—Philoſophi Egyptiorum Hierophantæ et Prophetæ. Ib. not. Cauſab. ‡ Ib. Strab. l. 4. Cæſ. l. 4. Am. Marcel. l. 15. &c.

ter of a prophet to miſtake it ſo far, if it had been what they meant to expreſs by Eubages. And the Druids, eſpecially, were by much too jealous to devolve a privilege ſo very honourable, as the preſcience of future events, upon an inferior claſs of men, as theſe undoubtedly were †. Nay, they ſeem not only to have been inferior to the Druids, but alſo to the Bards ‡. Marcellinus, indeed, ſays, that " they ſearched into the ſublimeſt properties of nature." But probably this might be with a view to open and enlarge their minds, before they were admitted to offices of ſuch importance to the public, as thoſe of either the Bards or Druids. If to this we add, what ſeems to be the moſt obvious etymology of the name, we may perhaps have the true notion of the Eubages, though we dare not offer it as deciſive. *Dea'* or *deu 'phaiſte*, which in the oblique caſes ſounds *'eu-vaiſte*, would readily be pronounced by a ſtranger *eubage*, or, with a proper termination, *eubages*. Now this word in the Celtic, ſignifies *good* or *promiſing youths;* ſuch as the Druids, who had the whole management and education of the young, would naturally direct to the moſt important offices, which, without any reſpect to family or tribe, were always given to the moſt worthy.

NOR was merit leſs neceſſary to the advancement, than to the firſt admiſſion, of every probationer for theſe ſacred orders. On the application which they gave to ſtudy, and the proficiency which they made in ſcience, it entirely depended, when, or whether, they ſhould be raiſed to the ſtation of *Sennachai*. Theſe, according to tradition, and the etymology of the word *, were the chronologers, ge-

† Strab. l. 4. Am. Marcel. l. 15.

‡ See Anc. Un. Hiſt. fol. vol. vii. p. 365.

* From *ſennachas*, " genealogy or hiſtory." Theſe were probably the σεμνοθεοι of Laërtius, and the Semnones and Sennani that we read of in ſome other authors who treat of the religious orders of the Celts.

genealogiſts, and hiſtorians of the Celtic nation. When the mind was thus expanded by an acquaintance with hiſtory, and the memory ſtored with an ample fund of uſeful knowledge, the probationers would be advanced to the degree or claſs of *Bards*, if they were found to have a genius for poetry, and to be irreproachable in their moral character.

THE province of the bards was to celebrate the praiſes of heroes, and to immortalize their name in their ſongs. By repeating theſe conſtantly at their entertainments, and ſetting them off with all the charms of vocal and inſtrumental muſic, they excited in the minds of their hearers a love of virtue, a thirſt of glory, and an enthuſiaſm for fame, which now we can ſcarce have any conception of †. They alſo accompanied the warriors to the field of battle *, that they might animate them, during the action, with ſuch ſongs as were calculated to rouſe their ſpirits, and to inſpire them with intrepidity and contempt of death; and that they might be eye-witneſſes of their behaviour, and know what degree of praiſe it merited in the ſong ‡. So great was the veneration in which this claſs of men was held, and ſuch was the reſpect paid to the muſes by the Celtic tribes, that we are told the interpoſition of a bard could ſtop, at once, a whole army in the very ardour of fighting †. It was not till after the Druids became extinct, that the bards, ſurviving every check under which they were held by that ſuperior order, forfeited this high eſteem, by conferring praiſe or cenſure where it was not due, as either intereſt ſwayed, or paſſion

† Dio. Sicul. l. 5. & l. 6. c. 9. Lucan. i. 447. Am. Marcel. l. 15. * Pauſan. in Phoc. Tacit. annal. l. 14. c. 30. ‡ Torfæus in Orcad. præf. † Diod. Sicul. l. 6. c. 9.

ſion influenced them. Whilſt the Druids ſubſiſted, the character as well as capacity of the bards muſt have been well tried, and long approved, before they were permitted to enter upon an office of ſuch importance to the public, as that which they filled. It likewiſe depended upon their ſtill maintaining and improving that character, whether they ſhould ever be raiſed to that coveted ſtation above them, which had been the great object of their ambition during a courſe of perhaps twenty years previous ſtudy and probation ‡.

As they were only the worthieſt who would be allowed to reach this eminence, and as their life would be then far advanced, and their habits of virtue, by long practice, well confirmed, there was every reaſon to expect from the Druids a continuance of their good behaviour. Nothing but this could ſecure to them either their office or reſpect. But what would help moſt to keep their attention to character always awake was, that the Arch-druid was choſen, by the majority of voices, from the worthieſt of their number §. The hope of attaining, one day, to this honour, would help to inſpire them conſtantly with a laudable ambition to excel, and to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the practice of every noble and amiable virtue. To the Arch-Druid, as to an infallible oracle, all doubtful and controverted caſes were referred. He had the caſting voice in all their aſſemblies, and there lay no appeal from his deciſion †.

THE

‡ Cæſ. l. 6. § Ib.

† The Arch-Druid was called in Galic by the name of *Cŏi'bhi*, or *Coibhi' Druidh*. Vid. Dr. M'Pherſon's Diſſert. XIX.—The veneration in which his character was held, and the firm reliance which men had upon his aſſiſtance and friendſhip, may be learnt from the following proverb:

"Ge fagus clach do làr
"'S faigſe na ſin cabhair *Choibhi*."

"The ſtone is not ſo near the earth as the help of *Coivi* is to thoſe who need his aid."

THE province of the Druids, properly ſo called, was religion. Of this they were ſo remarkably jealous, that no kind of worſhip could be performed, nor any ſacrifice public or private offered, without their preſence and appointment *. Nor was this all: for, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel, they managed matters ſo dexterouſly, that they engroſſed all power, civil as well as religious; inſomuch, that no buſineſs whatever, of any moment, could be done without their concurrence. Under the character of either prieſts, magiſtrates, philoſophers, or phyſicians, they took every thing under their cognizance. This vaſt authority, with the other privileges and immunities annexed to the office, rendered it an object of ambition to many of the moſt diſtinguiſhed families, and moſt aſpiring geniuſes. What theſe privileges were we ſhall briefly mention; and then conſider the Druids under each of their characters, in the order in which they were juſt now mentioned.

THE Druids and their diſciples were exeemed from all taxes and tribute, and even from war if they choſe it †. The magiſtrates of every city were annually choſen by them; the youth from their infancy were educated and formed by them; the kings themſelves were their miniſters, and could not, without their conſent, declare peace or war, nor ſo much as call a council. The Druids in fact were the kings, and thoſe who bore that name but the executioners of their ſentence ‡. The firſt had all the power, the latter all the odium of ſovereignty. They allowed him, we are told *, a precedence in matters of no real importance; ſuch as the privilege of wearing ſeven colours in his *breacan* or *ſagum*, while they themſelves

* Cæſ. l. 6. Strab. l. 4. † Lucan. l. 1. Cæſ. l. 6. ‡ Tac. Germ. c. 11. Cæſ. l. 7. Dio. Chryſ. Orat. 49. Amm. Marcel. l. 15. Dio. Sicul. l. 6. c. 9. &c.
* See Toland's Lett. on the Druids.

ſelves were ſatisfied with ſix. But people ſeldom grudge to bow the knee before idols of their own erecting. And even in theſe matters, of no more than imaginary conſequence, the Druids were not ſo far ſhort of the king, as they were beyond all others. Perſons of the greateſt quality were allowed but four colours in their robe; and others, in proportion to their rank, ſtill fewer. In the reſt of their dreſs, as well as in this, the Druids aſſumed ſome diſtinguiſhing peculiarity. They wore long habits which reached to the heel †, whilſt that of others came only to the knee. They wore their hair ſhort, whilſt that of others was long; and their beard long, whilſt that of others, except their upper-lip, was generally ſhort. They wore in their hand a white wand, called *Slatan drui'eachd*, or magic wand; with an egg, or amulet of an oval ſhape, incaſed in gold, about their neck, and a white ſurplice over their ſhoulders, eſpecially when they officiated *. Thus, no perſon could caſt his eye upon a Druid without being ſtruck with ſome badge of his office, which put him in mind of his diſtinction, and challenged reverence to it.

CONSIDERING the power and privileges of the Druids, we may well ſuppoſe their revenue was conſiderable, though we cannot aſcertain it. Their number and rank would require it to be large, and their authority would enable them to make it ſo. Indeed, ſtrictly ſpeaking, every thing was in their own power; and the people may be ſaid to have received their allowance from their hand, rather than they from the hand of the people. Of the moderation

† Vid. Himer. de Abar. ap. Photium.

* Vid. int. al. Cæſ. et Plin. l. 16. c. 44. Strabo, l. 4.—Even in their very ſhoes, or ſandals, which conſiſted of wood, and were of a pentagonal ſhape, the Druids affected a difference and diſtinction from others. Aventin. Annal. Boi. l. 1. ap. El. Sched.

tion of the Druids, however, and of the mildneſs with which they exerciſed their ſway, we need no other evidence than the length of time for which they ſubſiſted. Had they been either cruel or oppreſſive, a rough, warlike, and unpoliſhed race of men would not, for above two thouſand years, have borne with them.

THIS moderation will appear the more remarkable, if we conſider, that, as the Druids did not always live a ſingle life, the deſire of aggrandizing their own families might be a ſtrong temptation to exceed the bounds of it. Some ancient authors indeed have made celibacy eſſential to this order; probably becauſe a great many, from their love to abſtracted ſtudy and contemplation, preferred it. But in this country, at leaſt, and in Ireland, if we can give any faith to our traditions and our poems, they thought the conjugal ſtate neither unlawful nor uncreditable †.

HAVING premiſed theſe general obſervations upon the order and inſtitution of the Druids, we ſhall now proceed to take a more particular view of them, under each of thoſe characters or offices with which they appear to have been inveſted.

† See Oſſian's poem of *Dargo, the ſon of the Druid*, in the following Collection; and ſeveral inſtances in Toland's Miſcell. p. 55.

It is probable the Druideſſes, which ſome hiſtorians ſpeak of, have been, generally, no other than the wives of the Druids, as tradition hath handed down nothing concerning them. Nor is it unlikely, that the cuſtom of giving the name of the Druids ſometimes a maſculine and ſometimes a feminine termination, might ſomewhat multiply the number of theſe Druideſſes; the *Druides* and the *Druidæ* being liable to be miſtaken for the male and female of this order.

CHAP. II.

Of the DRUIDS, *conſidered as Prieſts; with an account of their religious Faith and Worſhip.*

IT has been already obſerved, that the religion of the Druids was derived from Noah. We ſhould therefore expect to find in it that ſimplicity which diſtinguiſhed the patriarchial faith and worſhip. One GOD, no temple, no image, an altar of either turf or ſtone, an offering from the increaſe of the fold or of the field, accompanied with a pure heart and clean hands, are the features that ſhould be moſt conſpicuous in ſuch a parent's offspring. It muſt be confeſſed, however, that the few ſketches which are given us of Druidiſm are far from anſwering this deſcription. But this may perhaps be the fault of thoſe who drew the picture, and who, from their want of acquaintance with the original, or from their prejudice againſt it, might be diſpoſed to give rather an ugly, than a real likeneſs. A fond partiality for their own religion, a contempt as well as ignorance of that of the Druids, and a fixed averſion to thoſe nations among whom it prevailed, has evidently miſled, in this caſe, the writers of Greece and Rome *. The worſt of their own religion is what they often deſcribe inſtead of this, which was not greatly corrupted till theirs came to be mingled with it.

THAT

* Vid. Joſeph. cont. Apion. l. 1.---Anc. Un. Hiſt. *Of the Gauls*, § 2.---In the ſame manner, ſome of them have alleged that Bacchus was worſhipped by the Jews, which even their bitter enemy Tacitus refutes. Comp. Plut. Sympoſ. l. 4. cum Tac. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 5.

* Pez-

THAT the patriarchal religion remained in its priſtine purity among the Druids, for ſeveral ages, we may eaſily believe. The firſt corruptions which crept into it, any where, were probably ſome time after the reign of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mercury or Teutat, who were kings of the Celts much about the time of Terah, Abraham, and Iſaac *. The hymns or ſongs, which, according to the Celtic manner, celebrated the exploitsof thoſe princes after their death, might lead the vulgar by degrees to pay them religious worſhip and adoration. It was alſo the cuſtom of the Celts, as we find from Oſſian, not only to rehearſe theſe poems at their public meetings, but even to repeat them, at times, over the tombs of the departed. From this to ſuperſtition, the tranſition is ſhort and eaſy. Accordingly, Jupiter was worſhipped in Crete, while at Gnoſſus they could ſtill point out his tomb †.

WHAT greatly helped to introduce this corruption into the Celtic religion, in thoſe parts, is that Cres, the ſon of that Jupiter, was at the head of the Curetes ‡ or Druids, in that country at the time, and became after his father's death both prieſt and king *. Inſtead, therefore, of checking thoſe extravagancies, he had every motive which his intereſt or vanity could ſuggeſt to help them on. Every mark of honour conferred upon the father, would naturally procure reſpect to the ſon. Perhaps a ſtately monument which had been raiſed over Jupiter's tomb, firſt induced the Druids in thoſe parts to adopt temples. And if we only ſuppoſe the image of the dead ſet up in this monument, the floodgates were widely opened to

* Pezron Ant. Celt. c. 15, &c.

† Lactant. l. 1. c. 11.

‡ The Druids had the name of *Curetes*, or *Co'retich*, (peacemakers), from their exerciſing the function of judges, and their ſettling of controverſies.

* Pezron, c. 12.

† Gen-

to that idolatry and polytheiſm, which had infected moſt other nations before it ſeized the family of Japhet, on whom his father had entailed a peculiar bleſſing †.

We are not, however to ſuppoſe, that countries ſo remote from Crete, and ſo little intereſted in the princes who reigned there, as Britain and Gaul were, would be ſo ready to pay divine honours to thoſe diſtant and unknown heroes. Mankind, in general, are too tenacious of their religion to admit eaſily of ſuch innovations, at leaſt till they are once well hackneyed in them. The Druids, of theſe parts eſpecially, were too jealous of their religious rites to ſuffer eaſily ſuch encroachments. At any rate, had they been diſpoſed to deify any mortal being, they could find, nearer home, heroes to whom they had been more obliged, or whom it was more their intereſt to flatter. We may therefore, on very good grounds, affirm with ſeveral learned antiquaries, that the Gauliſh and Britiſh Druids did not give into idolatry and polytheiſm, till the Romans, after their conqueſts, had conſtrained them to it. Ancient authors, indeed, take no notice of this circumſtance. They rather ſpeak of the Druids of even theſe countries as worſhipping a multiplicity of deities, prior to the introduction of their gods. At this we cannot be ſurpriſed, as it was natural for perſons who ſaw their own country ſwarm with divinities, to think they muſt be equally numerous in other nations. It were eaſy to ſhew, further, that they were often miſled, not more by this prejudice, than by appearances. Whenever they ſaw any ceremony that reſembled any religious rite which they were acquainted with at home, they readily concluded, that here it had the ſame object, and the ſame mean-

† Gen. ix. 27.

meaning. Thus, if hymns were ſung by the bards over a hero's tomb, they would infer it was in honour of ſome god, whoſe name they would gather from ſome other circumſtance. Or if a perſon was ſtruck with awe on hearing the *Tarnanich* or thunder, and thereby led to put up an ejaculation to the Deity, the *Taranis* itſelf would be conſtrued to be the object of their worſhip.

AMONG the Greeks, there were many heaps of ſtones conſecrated to Mercury*; and among the Latins, there were numberleſs rude pillars conſecrated to the ſame divinity, under the denomination of *Faunus*. In Gaul and Britain, nothing was more frequent than heaps and pillars exactly ſimilar to theſe; the firſt being monuments raiſed over the dead; and the laſt, ſigns of memorable events, or altars of the Druids. But a Roman ſoldier, left to his own conjecture, for the firſt maxim of their religion forbade the natives to inſtruct him on this head, would immediately conclude, that they were, as in his own country, ſymbols of Mercury. Hence we are told, that Mercury was the principal object of the Druidical worſhip†. The Romans would likewiſe ſee other ceremonies not unlike thoſe performed by their countrymen to Apollo ‡, from which they would infer, that theſe were in honour of the ſame deity. They ſaw theſe ceremonies performed on heaps which the natives called *carns;* and therefore they joined the epithet of *Carneus* to Apollo §. They learnt that they were performed to a Being of whom the

* Phurnut. de nat. Deor. c. 16.

† Cæſ. l. 6. &c.

‡ Vid. Sil. Ital. l. 5. v. 177.

§ The Τα Καρνεια, or *Carnean games* of the Greeks, in which prizes were adjudged to the beſt muſicians and poets, ſeem alſo to have been of the ſame origin. The great attention which the Celts and their Druids paid to muſic and poetry, makes it probable, that the laudable cuſtom as well as the name of this feſtival had been borrowed from them. Vid. Plut. in Apophtheg.

* The

the *grian* or ſun was conſidered as the ſymbol; and therefore they likewiſe gave to their Apollo the title of *Grannus*, and thought he was certainly the ſame with the *Be'il* worſhipped by the Druids. Thus it was eaſy, if men judged from reſemblances, to find many a Roman divinity in Britain, which, in fact, the natives had no knowledge of till after their intercourſe with that people.

As a further preſumption that polytheiſm did not prevail in theſe countries till after the invaſion of the Romans, it may be obſerved, that, in the Galic or Celtic language, there is no word, no cuſtom, no alluſion, which gives the leaſt hint of any of theſe pretended divinities. The names of the days of the week, by having the Latin word *dies* prefixed to them, ſhew of what extract they are, and how late they have been imported. That there is no hint of the names of any of theſe divinities in the Galic language is the more remarkable, as it abounds with numberleſs alluſions to the name of *Be'il*, who is allowed to have been the ſupreme, and ſeems to have been the ſole, object of their worſhip. The word *Bea'uil*, of which *Be'al* or *Be'il* is but the quick pronunciation or contraction, ſignifies the *life of every thing*, or the *ſource of all beings* *. This figurative name, ſo expreſſive of the peculiar nature and ſovereign property of GOD, ſeems to have been deviſed by the Druids, on purpoſe, to guard againſt polytheiſm and every other wrong and mean notion of the Deity. For this reaſon, the word appears to have been much more generally uſed by them than their ſimple name for the Supreme Being, which was *Dia* or *Dhia* †, the ſame with

* The Tuiſco of Germany, or Teutates of Gaul, had exactly the ſame meaning, ſignifying, "God the Father of all beings." Dr. Macpherſon's Antiq. Diſſert. 19.

† In the oblique caſes it has *De* and *Dhe*.

with the *Iah* of the Hebrews; and therefore, in all probability, the common name by which he was expreſſed by both before their ſeparation at Shinar.

NOTWITHSTANDING this clear deſignation which the Druids gave of the One Supreme Being, the creator and upholder of all things, the idea of ſuch a pure Spirit was ſtill too refined for the groſs conceptions of the vulgar. "They went forward, and could not find him; and backward, but could not perceive him." Some object muſt therefore be found to repreſent to them this inviſible Being. For this purpoſe the Druids fix upon the ſun, the great reviver of nature, as the propereſt emblem of Him who was the *life of every thing*; being the moſt beneficial, as well as the moſt glorious object, which their eye could meet with. And leſt the vulgar, who have always been prone to idolatry and ſuperſtition, ſhould terminate their worſhip on the ſun itſelf, inſtead of that great Being whom it was meant to ſhadow forth, the Druids took care that its very name *, which intimated that it was no more than fire, ſhould guard them, as much as poſſible, againſt that error. That it always did ſo, we cannot ſay. But it is certain, that never did any prieſts take ſo much care as the Druids, to uſe ſuch divinity-terms as might convey clear and diſtinct ideas of whatever they were meant to ſignify. Every term in their religion preſents to the mind, in its very etymology, ſo clear and ſtrong a light, as would be rather darkened than explained by the longeſt theological lecture.

Dhe. Of this, the *Eſus* or *Heſus*, ſaid to have been worſhipped by the Druids, ſeems to have been only a corruption; and the Θεος and *Deus* of the Greeks and Latins were manifeſtly derived from it.

* *Grian*, or *Gre'ine*, in the oblique caſes, from *Grè* and *'heine*, the *nature or eſſence of fire*.

To this belief of one Supreme Being, for it does not appear that the Druids either acknowledged or worſhipped any other deity †, we may add their belief of an evil and inferior Dæmon, whoſe conſtant ſtudy was to oppoſe and counteract the deſigns of the greateſt and beſt Being. In all nations, the difficulty which men found in accounting for the origin of evil, or the tradition of its having been introduced into the world by an evil ſpirit, rendered this belief pretty univerſal. The particular doctrine of the Druids with regard to this being, we know not, as nothing is now to be found of him but the name. This is ſtill uſed in the Galic to denote the Devil; the word *Diabhol* being only the Latin *Diabolus*, and of a much later date than the *Aibhiſt'er** of the Druids.

No article of faith was more firmly believed and inculcated by the Druids, than *Fate* or predeſtination. To this day the Highlanders univerſally apply this doctrine, and derive from it on moſt occaſions a conſiderable ſhare of comfort. *Bha ſud an* DAN *damh*, "ſucha thing was decreed for me," adminiſters to the conſcience a kind of opiate under many a bitter reflection.

THE Druids further held the immortality of the ſoul †, and a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhments; in either of which, every perſon

† "*Unicus* autem Deus a Celtis colebatur," &c. Vid. El. Sched. de Dis. German. Syn. 1. c. 12.---"Heſus, Tharamis, Belenus, unus tantummodo Deus." Ib. 2. 26.---"*Unum* Deum, fulgoris effectorem, Dominum hujus univerſi *ſolum* agnoſcunt." Procop. Goth. l. 3.

* The analyſis of this word is either *Aï-ti's-ear* (tranſpoſing the letter *s*) "oppoſer of the beſt being;" or rather *aibhiſt'er*, "deſtroyer," from *Aibhiſt*, "ruin or deſtruction." Thus Oſſian, ſpeaking of the ruin of Lugar's houſe, in the poem of Cuthon, ſays

Ged' tha e'n diugh na *aibhiſt* fhuair,
Bha e uair a b' aros righ.

† Am. Marcel. l. 15. Cæſ. l. 6. &c.

perſon was to have that retribution which his good or bad conduct in life deſerved. In this futurity, they cloathed the ſoul with a ſort of airy vehicle, or lighter body, nôt altogether incapable of pleaſure or pain. To theſe departed beings they allowed, in their own province and element, a conſiderable power; but allowed them little influence over the affairs of men.

OF the immortality of the ſoul the Druids ſeem to have had a much firmer and more invariable belief, than the prieſts or philoſophers of the Greeks and Romans, who, excepting perhaps a few inſtances, might be ſaid rather to wiſh and hope, than ſteadily to believe it. Whereas the Druids, by conſtantly inculcating this doctrine, procured to it not only a vague and general, but a ſteady and prevailing faith, in all the parts where their religion prevailed. But the firmneſs of this belief among the Celtic nations, and the influence which it muſt have had upon their conduct, will better appear when we come to ſpeak of ſome of their funeral cuſtoms. In the mean time, let us conſider what were the ideas which they had with regard to this future ſtate of happineſs and miſery.

THE ſtate of bliſs, into which the ſouls of good and brave men were ſuppoſed by the Druids to enter immediately after their death, was called *Flath-innis;* which ſignifies, *the iſland of the brave or virtuous*, and is ſtill uſed in the Galic to denote *heaven*. In this iſland there was an eternal ſpring, and an immortal youth. The ſun ſhed always, there, its kindeſt influence. Gentle breezes fanned it, and ſtreams of ever-equal currents watered it. The trees were alive with muſic, and bending to the ground with flowers and fruit. The face of nature, always unruffled and ſerene, diffuſed on every creature happineſs, and wore a perpetual ſmile of

joy; whilſt the inhabitants, ſtrangers to every thing that could give pain, enjoyed one eternal ſcene of calm feſtivity and gladneſs. In ſhort, every diſagreeable idea was removed from the Druidical *Flath-innis*, and no property was wanting to it which could recommend a Paradiſe. Indeed the tradition concerning the firſt paradiſe, which in the earlieſt ſtage of Druidiſm would be freſh and well known, might be the model on which they formed it *.

FROM the airy halls and other circumſtances mentioned in the poems of Oſſian, the ſituation of this happy place ſeems to have been in ſome calm, upper region, beyond the reach of every evil which infeſts this lower world. This, it muſt be allowed, was a far more agreeable ſite for it than that ſubterraneous region in which the Greeks and Latins placed their Elyſian fields. However bleſſed thoſe abodes may have been when reached, the deſcent and entrance to them, as deſcribed in the hiſtory of Æneas and Ulyſſes, are

* The following extract of an ancient Galic tale relating to the Celtic paradiſe, and tranſlated by Mr Macpherſon, will help to illuſtrate this ſubject.---" The *Iſle* ſpread large before him like a pleaſing dream of the ſoul; where diſtance fades not on the ſight; where nearneſs fatigues not the eye. It had its gently-ſloping hills of green; nor did they wholly want their clouds: But the clouds were bright and tranſparent; and each involved in its boſom the ſource of a ſtream; a beauteous ſtream, which wandering down the ſteep, was like the faint notes of the half-touched harp to the diſtant ear. The valleys were open, and free to the ocean; trees loaded with leaves which ſcarcely waved to the light breeze, were ſcattered on the green declivities and riſing grounds. The rude winds walked not on the mountain; no ſtorm took its courſe through the ſky. All was calm and bright; the pure ſun of autumn ſhone from his blue ſky on the fields. He haſtened not to the weſt for repoſe; nor was he ſeen to riſe from the eaſt. He ſits in his mid-day height, and looks obliquely on the *Noble Iſle*.

In each valley is its ſlow-moving ſtream. The pure waters ſwell over the banks, yet abſtain from the fields. The ſhowers diſturb them not; nor are they leſſened by the heat of the ſun. On the riſing hill are the halls of the departed---the high-roofed dwellings of the heroes of old." Introduc. to Hiſt. of Brit. p. 183.

are ſo full of horror, that the heart cannot, without great reluctance, be reconciled to them. The Druidical *Fla'innis* had in it nothing of this forbidding gloom. The paſſage to it was ſhort and agreeable; and the ſoul, if it had no crime to clog it, would mount, with joy and eaſe, to this its native element. This notion of heaven, as it rendered death, in a good cauſe, rather agreeable than terrible, muſt have had a ſurpriſing effect in inſpiring the Celtic tribes with courage in whatever cauſe their Druids held to be lawful. Accordingly, that contempt of death and intrepidity in war, which ſo remarkably diſtinguiſhed this people, is generally aſcribed to this cauſe ‡.

THE Hell of the Druids was in every reſpect the reverſe of their *Fla'innis*, or Heaven. It was a dark, diſmal region, which no ray of light, no friendly beam of the ſun, ever viſited. It was infeſted with every animal of the vile, venomous, and hurtful kind *. There, ſerpents ſtung and hiſſed, lions roared, and wolves devoured. The wretches, however, had not the privilege of dying. Prometheus-like, they ſtill grew although they were ſtill conſumed. The moſt criminal were confined to caverns, or lower dungeons which

‡ Vobis auctoribus, umbræ,
Non tacitas Erebi ſedes, Ditiſque profundi
Pallida regna petunt: regit inde ſpiritus artus
Orbe alio: longæ (canitis ſi cognita) vitæ
Mors media eſt. Certe populi, quos deſpicit Arctos,
Felices errore ſuo, quos ille timorum
Maximus haud urget leti metus. *Inde ruendi*
In ferrum mens prona viris animæque capaces
Mortis. LUCAN. lib. 1.

* See note on *Iorna*, in the poem of *Gaul*, in the following collection. We ſhould not, on this head, build ſo much on the evidence of tales and tradition, if there had not been ſuch conformity between them and the notions which other northern nations had of the ſame place. Of theſe, ſeveral inſtances may be ſeen in *Keyzler*, *Rudbeck*, and others who have wrote of the northern antiquities.

†—I

which were ſtill more horrible. In the bottom of theſe they were almoſt immerſed in ſnakes, whilſt the roof conſtantly diſtilled poiſon. The leaſt guilty, on the other hand, or ſuch as were only *negatively* good, and led a life that was, though not vitious, yet in a great meaſure idle or uſeleſs, had their reſidence aſſigned them in thick fenny vapours, ſomewhat elevated above theſe diſmal abodes †. The cold, too, was ſo intenſe in all theſe

"Thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice,"

that the bodies of the inhabitants, which were ſuppoſed to be of a groſs and cloggy nature on account of their guilt, muſt have been in a moment frozen to death, if it was poſſible for death to relieve them. It was from this laſt circumſtance, which was thought the moſt terrible, and the groundwork of all the reſt, that the place derived its name and general character. They gave it the name of *Iſurin* *, that is, *the iſle of the cold land or climate*. It is remarkable, that in the Galic language this ſtill continues to be the only name for hell, although believed, upon the beſt of evidences, to be in its qualities diametrically oppoſite. The firſt teachers of Chriſtianity in that language adopted, it ſeems, the divinity-terms of the Druids, with which the people had already been acquainted, without ever ſcrutinizing their nature. The conſequence was, that ideas quite oppoſite to their original meaning and etymology came by degrees to be affixed to ſome of them, as the two religions were of a very different genius. This, however,

† ---"In the lonely vale of ſtreams, abides the little ſoul. Years roll on, ſeaſons return, but he is ſtill unknown. In a blaſt comes cloudy death, and lays his grey head low. His ghoſt is rolled on the vapour of the *fenny* field. Its courſe is never on hills, or moſſy vales of wind." Temora, B. iv.

* From *I*, an iſland, *fuar*, cold, and *fhuinn*, land or climate. As the *fh* is quieſcent, the word ſounds *Iſurin*, and obliquely *Iurin*.

however, produces no manner of confuſion, as even the critic himſelf ſeldom or never adverts to it. Accuſtomed to annex certain ideas to certain words from our infancy, the mind, at length, performs the operation ſo quickly and mechanically, that, by the time the judgment is ripe for ſuch a work, it never thinks of ſtopping to analyſe their conſtituent parts, or trace their etymology.

THIS notion of hell, which prevailed among the Celtic nations and their Druids, was, in their circumſtances, not unnatural. If to be near the ſun, the great ſymbol of their Divinity, and the great object of their regard, on account of this and its own uſefulneſs, was happineſs, it was conſequently miſery to be at a diſtance from it. Beſides, every country, unguided by revelation, has always made its future puniſhments conſiſt in the aggregate of all thoſe evils which ſeemed, to it, the moſt grievous and terrible. Hence, in climates ſo diſagreeably hot as greatly to incommode the inhabitants, ſuch as Aſia, Africa, and other eaſtern countries, men placed the ſeat of their hell in extreme heat, long before they had any expreſs revelation concerning its nature. Thus Homer, whoſe countrymen had the moſt of their religion brought to them, by Orpheus and others, from the Eaſt, makes his hell a place

"Where, chain'd on *burning* rocks, the Titans groan." IL. 5.

THE Celtic tribes, on the other hand, who were ſpread over the moſt of Europe, as well as the more northern Scythians, feeling more inconvenience from cold than from heat, placed the ſeat of their hell in the midſt of eternal froſts and colds, being the idea which they moſt abhorred. It will appear ſtill more natural for them

them to have made this a principal ingredient in their future puniſhments, if we conſider, that the climate of theſe countries has been then much colder than it is now, or has been for many ages back. The earlieſt accounts we have of even Italy, France, and Spain, deſcribe their mountains as covered with almoſt perpetual ſnow; and ſpeak of rivers, now ſeldom known to freeze, as covered, then, with ſuch ice, as ſerved for bridges to whole armies. The Romans were ſo ſenſible of this change, even in their time, that they aſcribed it to ſome favourable alteration in the poſition of the earth, ſaid to have been predicted by the famous Greek aſtronomer Hipparchus; but which is more naturally accounted for from the deſtroying of many vaſt foreſts, which excluded from the earth the rays of the ſun, and ſtagnated the air; from the draining of lakes and marſhes; the application of warm manures, and other conſequences of cultivation.

THESE ideas of a future ſtate which prevailed among the Druids, were ſo well adapted to the feelings of their people, that they could not fail to ſtrike upon the heart in the moſt forcible manner. But what conſtituted the chief difference betwixt the future ſtate of the Celts, and that of other ancient nations, was not any peculiar quality aſcribed to it, but the reſpect and lively belief which had been procured to it by its Teachers, and the influence which this belief had upon mens conduct *. Among the Greeks and Romans, the philoſophers did not greatly intereſt themſelves in matters of religion;

* So firm was this belief, that it was cuſtomary with them to ſend, along with the dead, epiſtles to their departed friends, and ſometimes to lend money on bills payable in the next world. Dio. Sicul. l. 5. and Val. Maxim.---"I ſhould call them fools (ſays this laſt author) if Pythagoras in his cloak, had not thought juſt as theſe did in their plaids."

* Tac.

gion; and the prieſts, whoſe particular province it was, only ſtudied how to make their gain of it. To compaſs this end, and to pleaſe the ſuperſtitious vulgar, they made it conſiſt, for the moſt part, of a long train of farcical and unmeaning ceremonies, which always eat up the vitals of religion wherever they prevail. With them, the nature of a future ſtate in particular, that part of religion which has moſt influence on mens conduct, was entirely abandoned to the wanton fancy of their poets. Theſe ſoon involved it in fable, and interlarded it with fiction. By this means, they not only ruined its credit with the vulgar, but made even philoſophers themſelves ſtagger, and almoſt call the truth of it in queſtion. The fables of Elyſium and Tartarus, on which every poet tried his invention, became very amuſing ſtories, but had little or no influence on the heart and behaviour.

THE Druids, on the other hand, were the moſt zealous guardians of every part of their religion. No poet, nor any other perſon, was allowed to meddle or interfere with any part of it, nor ſo much as to mention any article of it, but with the greateſt caution, and with the utmoſt reverence and reſpect. By this means religion, among them, always maintained its credit. Every body beheld it, at an awful diſtance, with that veneration which its own ſimplicity and importance, as well as the authority of its guardians, demanded to be paid it. This, together with the civil authority with which the Druids were inveſted, and ſome other cauſes which will fall more properly under our obſervation in another place, concurred to make the religion of the Celts a rule of life and practice. Among them, to have any comfort or credit here, or any hope of happineſs hereafter, a man muſt have guided his life

by the precepts of religion, and by the direction of the Druid, on whoſe approbation his welfare in both worlds was ſuppoſed to be in a great meaſure depending. If we allow a Celt to have been formed of the ſame materials with a Greek or Roman, his religion ought certainly to make him a better man and a greater hero.

HAVING thus travelled through the religious creed of the Druids, we proceed now to take a brief view of their worſhip, and ſome other things which had a relation to it.

THE Druids, till their religion had been interlarded with that of other nations, had neither images nor temples. They meant by this to give the moſt auguſt idea of the Supreme Being, and to guard againſt every thing that might give a low or limited notion of his nature and perfections. They thought it abſurd, ſays Tacitus, to pourtray like a man, or circumſcribe within walls, that Being who created the immenſity of the heavens *.

THE Druidical places of worſhip were marked out by a circle of ſtones called *Clachan* †, which ſtill continues to be the Galic term for a place of worſhip. Theſe clachans, or circles, within the conſecrated pale of which none were admitted but the Druids, were generally from twenty feet to twenty yards in diameter. Where the Druids held their larger aſſemblies, or general meetings, they ſometimes exceeded this ſize, and had, within the outer precinct, another leſſer circle or ſquare ‡, which is ſuppoſed to have been the place of the Arch-druid, or preſident of the aſſembly.

The Druids affected to have the ſtones, which formed theſe circles, of

* Tac. Germ. c. 9.

† *Clachan* literally ſignifies *ſtones*.

‡ See a deſcription of one of theſe in Mr Pennant's Tour, vol. ii. p. 38. 3d edit.

of a vaſt ſize; though the intention of them was only to mark the line of diſtinction between them and the profane vulgar. Some of theſe meaſure from fifteen to twenty feet in height, and ſometimes more, with ten or twelve in circumference *. In the centre there was a ſtone of a ſtill larger ſize than the ſurrounding ones, which ſerved for the purpoſe of an altar. When this could not be got of a ſize to their mind, a large oblong flag, ſupported by pillars, was ſubſtituted by the Druids in place of it. As they had ſometimes conſecrated ſpots of ground, and even whole groves and lakes, which were held ſo ſacred, that the largeſt treaſures which were heaped in them could not tempt the laity to approach them †; ſo had they likewiſe altars, without having this pale to proclaim their ſanctity. The ſize of theſe altars, which were called *cromleachs*, or *clach-ſleachda*' ‡, was ſometimes incredible. One in Pembrokeſhire is ſaid to have been twenty-eight feet high, and about twenty in circumference §. Another on the confines of Alſace, meaſured about thirty-ſix feet in circumference, twelve and a half in breadth, and more than four in thickneſs, being reared on a parcel of other ſtones, three or four feet above the earth's ſurface *. And the dimenſions of a third in *Poitiers*, exceed both of theſe put together †.

IN the Highlands and Weſtern Iſles, many of theſe altars and o-

D 2 beliſks

* Ib. and Brand on W. Iſles, p. 44.

† Cæſ. Com. l. 6. Diod. Sicul. l. 5. c. 2. &c.

‡ *i. e.* the ſtone of worſhip or bending.

§ Toland's Miſcel. p. 97.

* Keyzler, Ant. Sept.

† "La pierre levée de Poitiers a ſoixante pieds de tour, et elle eſt posée ſur cinq autres pierres, ſans qu'on ſache non plus ni pourquoi, ni comment." Cherveau. Mem. d'Angl. 380. ap. Tol.---"I have reſerved for the laſt of theſe prodigies, that amazing *rocking-ſtone* in the pariſh of Conſtantine, in Cornwal, which is 97 feet in circumference, 60 feet croſs the middle, and computed to be about 750 ton weight." Dr Borlaſe, Antiq. Cornwal.

* Brand

beliſks are ſtill to be met with; ſome of them of a ſize that muſt "make any one wonder how, in thoſe places and times, they got "ſuch large ſtones carried and erected *." Some of theſe, however, may have been originally intended as monuments to commemorate ſome remarkable event, or to point out the tomb of ſome diſtinguiſhed hero. Our ancient poems tell us, that this cuſtom was common, at leaſt, among the Caledonians; and we find it practiſed very early among other nations. Thus Laban and Jacob reared a pillar in memory of their reconciliation, and the latter raiſed another over the grave of his beloved Rachel †. But allowing this to have been the primary deſign of ſome of theſe obeliſks, yet from the prevailing opinion, that the *manes* of the dead, or ſome other guardian *genii*, were often near them, they were naturally calculated to inſpire a reverence in thoſe who approached them. Hence the Druids, who always took advantage of every circumſtance that might favour their own purpoſe, might chooſe them, on occaſions, for the place of holding their religious aſſemblies. It was probably the ſame conſideration which firſt induced the Druids to hold ſome of their ſolemn meetings on cairns, which had been raiſed over the moſt reſpected dead, or which had been the monuments of ſome remarkable event or tranſaction. This, as we have obſerved above, might have led ſtrangers to imagine that they were, on theſe occaſions, worſhipping Mercury, who was anciently repreſented in other countries by ſuch emblems; having many heaps conſecrated to him under the name of Ερμαι; and being himſelf, ſays Phurnutus, pourtrayed by "a ſquare ſtone, without hands or feet ‡."

A-

* Brand, p. 46. † Gen. xxxi. 45. and xxxv. 19, 20. ‡ De Nat. Deor. c. 16.

AMONG the Ethiopians, Arabians, Greeks, and Romans, as well as among the Celts, ſuch plain and rude pillars ſeem to have been uſed very early to mark out their places of worſhip †. Among all of them, it is probable, theſe pillars had originally the ſame meaning; ſome of them being monuments of events, and others ſymbols of the unity, ſtability, and power of God ‡. Among them all, a high degree of veneration ſeems alſo to have been paid to theſe objects. But the nature of this veneration ſeems to have been very different. Among the Ethiops and Arabs, it is generally allowed to have dwindled into downright idolatry; and among the Greeks and Romans, if it did not proceed thus far, yet it ſeems to have nearly approached it. That form of ſwearing, "Per Jovem lapidem," ſeems to intimate, that they thought ſomewhat of the divinity had been reſiding in the ſtone itſelf. Whereas, among the Celts, this ſuperſtitious regard, owing to the attention of their Druids to all religious matters, never grew to ſuch a height. The very name of theſe ſtones, as mentioned above, ſeems to prove, that they were only conſidered as marks to point out their places of worſhip. If this had not been the current idea of theſe *clachan*, or ſtones, at the introduction of Chriſtianity, how ſhould the word come to denote, then, and ſtill, *a place of worſhip?* The names of the moſt venerated kind of their *tumuli* or heaps, ſhew, in like manner, that their ideas of them were far from any thing of an idolatrous regard. Theſe were called *Si'uns* *, or *mounts of peace;* and ſeem, from their very name, to have the ſame origin with that which Jacob and Laban raiſed in token of their mutual reconciliation.

† Among the Hebrews, alſo, pillars were very anciently uſed for the ſame purpoſe. Gen. iii. 14.

‡ Max. Tyr. Serm. 38.

* *Sio'-dhun*, "mount of peace, or reconciliation."

tion †. The idea which the vulgar retain of theſe mounts, to this day, is, that they are inhabited by thoſe inferior kinds of *genii* which have got the denomination of *fairies*. In Galic, theſe beings have derived their name from theſe mounts, as they probably did their origin from the awe, which the approach of theſe places ‡, (the repoſitories of the dead, or the ſcenes of ſome ſolemn ratification,) naturally inſpired. From theſe ideas, which ſtill are, and for as many ages back as the origin of the notion of fairies have been annexed to theſe mounts: and from the very meaning of the word *ſi'un*, it is manifeſt, they were no appendages of idolatry or polytheiſm; and that the ſuppoſed Mercury, of whom they are utterly ſilent, had no concern with them.

THE Druids had generally thoſe circles and altars, at which they performed their religious ceremonies, ſituated near the deep murmur of ſome ſtream, within the gloom of groves, or under the ſhade of ſome venerable oak *. Whether this tree, which they held in great veneration, was conſidered, from its uſefulneſs, ſtrength, and duration, as an emblem of the Divinity; or choſen on account of the ſhade it gave in heat, and the ſhelter it afforded in cold; or that the ſolemnity of the place might contribute to throw an awful caſt over the mind, we ſhall not poſitively determine. Only it may be obſerved, that the laſt reaſon appears the moſt probable, if we conſider the powerful tendency of ſuch objects to diſpoſe the mind for ſerious impreſſions †. To which we may add, that the Druids ſeem to have had no other emblem of the Deity but the ſun; and that, in theſe cold countries, the oak was

† Geu. xxxi. 46---48. the mount of reconciliation." and Tac. Germ. c. 9.

‡ *Sí'chean*, or *daoine-ſi'*, "the *men* who dwell in

* Plin. paſſim. Cæſ. l. 6. c. 4. Luc. l. 3.

† Vid. Senec. ep. 41.

was no great ſecurity againſt the inclemency which moſt incommoded them, being bare at the ſeaſon in which they ſtood moſt in need of ſhelter. Be this as it will, groves were the common appendages of all ancient religions, whether falſe or true. The patriarchs choſe them for the place of their devotion; and where they did not find them, planted them ‡. And we find the degenerate Iſraelites, and the other nations around them, frequently blamed by the prophets for the abuſe to which this practice by degrees led them *. Like theſe, too, the Druids had their *high places*, or eminences, in ſight of the ſun, where thoſe *carns* were often ſituated, on which ſome of their religious ceremonies, and particularly their courts of judicature, were held. It does not appear, however, that the inhabitants of theſe countries paid to either of theſe places the ſame degree of ſuperſtitious regard. Perhaps the coldneſs of their climate, no leſs than the attention of their Druids, might check this tendency, and prevent its growing to that luxuriant extravagance which the heat of the climate might communicate to the conſtitution of the eaſtern nations.

OF the feſtivals of the Druids, the *Be'il-tin* and *Samh'-in* † were the principal. The firſt was held on the beginning of May, and is ſtill the Galic name for Whitſunday ‡. On this occaſion, as the word *Be'il-tin*, or *fire of Be'il*, implies, great rejoicings were made, and

‡ Gen. xxi. 33.—Groves were alſo the moſt ancient temples of the Romans. Plin. xii. 1.

* 2 Kings xvi. 4. Hoſ. iv. 13. Numb. xxiv. 14, &c.

† The one from *Be'il*, their name for the Deity, and *tein*, fire; the other from *ſamh*, peace, and *thein'*, fire, the *th* quieſcent. *Samh* is now for the moſt part changed into *tamh*; but its compounds all retain the *f*, as *famhach*, *famhchair*, &c.

‡ It was at this time that the Celts and Druids began their year, as appears from the Galic name ſtill uſed for the month of May, being *ceit'-uin*, (or *ceud-uin*), the *firſt month* or *time*.

and a large bonfire kindled, to congratulate the return of that beneficent luminary, which was conſidered as the emblem of the Supreme Being. The other of theſe ſolemnities was held upon Hallow-eve, which, in Galic, ſtill retains the name of *Samh-'in*. The word ſignifies *the fire of peace*, or the time of kindling the fire for maintaining the peace. It was at this ſeaſon that the Druids annually met in the moſt centrical places of every country, to adjuſt every diſpute, and decide every controverſy *. On that occaſion, all the fire in the country was extinguiſhed on the preceding evening, in order to be ſupplied, the next day, by a portion of the holy fire which was kindled and conſecrated by the Druids. Of this, no perſon who had infringed the peace, or was become obnoxious by any breach of law, or any failure in duty, was to have any ſhare, till he had firſt made all the reparation and ſubmiſſion which the Druids required of him. Whoever did not with the moſt implicit obedience agree to this, had the ſentence of excommunication, more dreaded than death, immediately denounced againſt him †. None was allowed to give him houſe or fire, or ſhew him the leaſt office of humanity, under the penalty of incurring the ſame ſentence. So that he and his family, if he had one, had before them a truly melancholy proſpect, in a cold country, upon the approach of winter. Nothing but that *eternal cold*, to which this was conſidered as the ſure prelude, could appear ſo terrible. The addreſs of the Druids in fixing their aſſizes to this ſeaſon, when every man's feeling prompted him to ſubmiſſion; and their contrivance of an inſtitution, which not only gave them abſolute power over the people, but alſo ſecured the public peace better than all the ſanc-

* Cæſ. l. 6. c. 13. † Ib.

ſanctions of modern laws, are very remarkable. In many parts of Scotland, theſe Hallow-eve fires continue ſtill to be kindled *; and, in ſome places, ſhould any family, through negligence, allow their fire to go out on that night or on Whitſuntide, they may find a difficulty in getting a ſupply from their neighbours the next morning. So hard it is to eradicate the remains of ſuperſtition, however ridiculous or abſurd its tenets.

BESIDES theſe two great feſtivals, the Druids obſerved the full moon †, and the ſixth day of it, on which they gathered their *miſleto;* with ſome other ſeaſons, which were regulated by the phaſes of the ſame planet, the progreſs of the ſun through the zodiac ‡, or the return of days inſtituted in commemoration of ſome remarkable events.

WE next inquire what kind of ſacrifices were offered on theſe occaſions by the Druids. Many have charged them with ceremonies, which, if true, they had good reaſon to perform in the darkeſt ſhades, and to conceal induſtriouſly from the public view. If the Druids ever offered any human ſacrifices, it is no more than moſt other ancient nations, and even the Greeks and Romans, are known to have been often guilty of §. From the general ſtrain of ſimplicity and good ſenſe which ran through the religion of the Druids, one would be tempted to think, that it was after their intercourſe with

 ſome

* The Galic councils forbade this practice, in their territories, under pain of death. Borlaſe, Ant. Corn. p. 131.

† Strabo, l. 3. Plin. l. 16. c. 44, &c.

‡ That the Druids of the Britiſh iſles were acquainted with the conſtellations, and with the ſigns of the zodiac, appears from Plutarch, who ſays, that the inhabitants of theſe places obſerved every thirtieth year a ſolemn feſtival in honour of Saturn, when his ſtar entered the ſign of Taurus. Plut. de Defect. Oracul.---et de facie in orbe Lunæ.

§ Tertull. in Apol. Lactant. Elias Sched. de Dis Germ. Syn. 2. c. 31. et auct. citat. ab iis.

ſome of theſe, which was the æra of every corruption in their religion, that they practiſed this horrid rite, if ever they did ſo at all. Some authors have taken great pains to exculpate them from this charge, even from the teſtimony of ancient writers *. As the honour of human nature and of our country may diſpoſe us to wiſh, ſo many preſumptions may lead us to believe, this opinion to be well founded. Thoſe who have charged the Druids with the fact, were greatly prejudiced againſt them, as they were the perſons who, from their love of liberty and vaſt influence over the people, made the moſt ſtrenuous oppoſition to the encroachments of every foreign power. They often ſtirred up the people to revolt, and ſhake off the yoke of the uſurpers. This was enough to render them obnoxious to thoſe who eſtimated the barbarity of any people, from the degree of bravery with which they oppoſed their natural enemies †. It was enough to make them throw every poſſible ſlur upon their character, in order to raiſe againſt them a general deteſtation. That pride, likewiſe, which led the Greeks and Romans to give all nations but their own the appellation of Barbarians, would make them treat with indignation and contempt, the beſt inſtitutions of the Druids. And the ignorance of theſe writers, whenever they treated of the religion of this order, muſt have been equal to either their pride or their prejudice. It muſt have been ſo in this inſtance more eſpecially; for a people who made it a fundamental maxim in their religion to conceal every part of it from ſtrangers, whom they in their turn deſpiſed, would moſt of all draw a cloſe curtain over this rite if they had practiſed it. But leſt

* Vid. Lewis Hiſt. Brit. c. 2. et auct. ab eo citat. † Vid. Tac. in Vit. Agric. c. 11. ad fin.

leſt we ſhould ſeem to build too much on the partiality of theſe writers, we muſt obſerve, that a particular cuſtom, which prevailed among the Celts in puniſhing their criminals, may very naturally be ſuppoſed to have given riſe to this barbarous account of the Druids. This cuſtom will fall under our obſervation more properly a little lower, when we come to treat of this order in their legiſlative capacity. In the mean time, we ſhall only remark, that the charge in queſtion tallies ill with ſome other particulars recorded of them by the ſame hiſtorians. That they, for inſtance, who had ſuch worthy notions of the Supreme Being as to think that no image, but the ſun, could give a ſhadow of him, and that no temple, but that which himſelf had built, was fit to ſerve him in, ſhould, notwithſtanding this, think to pacify him with the murder of their fellow-beings, ſeems a little incongruous. That philoſophers, ſo remarkable for their wiſdom and knowledge as to induce ſtrangers to come to them from other countries, and ſpend twenty years under their tuition, ſhould be thus barbarous in their manners, is equally improbable *. That religion ſhould be thus ſavage among nations whoſe morality, they tell us, was ſo pure, that it excelled the beſt laws preſcribed in other countries, is no leſs unlikely †. A picture, of which the different parts are ſo diſſimilar, was certainly intended, not to expreſs a true likeneſs of the original, but to expoſe and ridicule it.

FROM all that can be traced of the ſacrifices of the Druids in the remains of their cuſtoms and language in theſe countries, there is great reaſon to think, that, ſo far from being human, they were

* Tacit. Germ. c. 9. cum c. 40. ad fin. &c. Dio. Sicul. ap. Camb. Brit. p. 31. Plut. ap. Euſeb. prep. l. 5. c. 27. de inſul. adjac. Brit. &c. † Cæſ. l. 6. cum Tac. Germ. c. 19. ad fin. &c.

ſeldom even of the animal kind. I know not the leaſt hint, in the Galic language, cuſtoms, or traditions, that alludes to animal ſacrifices. This ſilence, with regard to theſe, is the more remarkable, as not only the diſtant alluſions, but even the practice, of ſome of their other ſacrifices, have ſtill ſome exiſtence in ſeveral parts of North Britain. Theſe conſiſt of a libation of flour, milk, eggs, and ſome few herbs and ſimples †. From this ariſes a preſumption that in theſe countries, at leaſt, the general caſt of the Druidical ſacrifices were of this nature; and the reaſon, probably, why the Britons held the hen and the gooſe ſacred *, was, that they might always be ſupplied with that part of the materials which, at ſome ſeaſons, was moſt likely to be ſcarce. What ſeems to be a kind of proof that theſe were the ſacrifices which the Druids generally offered is, that the very name of ſacrifice in Galic is compoſed of two words which ſignify *the offering of the cake* ‡. When at any time they were of a different kind, the boar §, and ſuch other animals as were hurtful to mankind, ſeem to have been made choice of. To make it a part of their religion to kill theſe, was not unworthy of the wiſdom of the Druids.

We have already ſeen what articles of faith were taught by this order. The ſame ſimplicity ſeems to have run through the doctrines which they inculcated on men as the rule of their practice. *To reverence the Deity, abſtain from evil, and behave valiantly,*

† Theſe might originally be the *ſelago* and *verbena*, which Pliny ſays were held ſacred by the Druids; 4. 11. & 25. 9. The *Samol*, which Mr Whitaker ſuppoſes to be the *ſeamrog*, might alſo be in the number. l. 16.

* Cæſ. l. 5.

‡ *Iob'oirt*; from *iob* or *uib*, "a raw cake or lump of dough," and *theirt*, "to offer," the *th* quieſcent.

§ Macrob. Saturnal. l. 6. c. 9. Aul. Gell. Noct. Attic. l. 16. c. 6.

liantly, were, according to Laërtius †, the three grand articles enjoined by the Druids. The firſt was a ſummary of their religious, the ſecond of their civil, and the third of their martial law. The ſame author tells us, that the moral diſcourſes of theſe philoſophers were rather ſhort and ſententious, than long and laboured harangues. As the Galic language abounds with a vaſt number of pithy and proverbial ſentences, anſwering this character, and as pregnant with good ſenſe as any that are to be found in any language, it is probable we are indebted for the moſt part of them to the Druids. What ſeems to confirm this opinion, is, that theſe noble maxims of prudence and morality are generally aſcribed to the *Sean'ar*, or *man of old times* *; by which is commonly meant ſomething that relates to the æra of Druidiſm, in contradiſtinction to that of Chriſtianity. Theſe apophthegms would be delivered rather with the authority of lawgivers, than with the perſuaſion of orators or preachers. The ſtrongeſt arguments to enforce them, would be the ſanction of rewards and puniſhments, of which the Druids (who kept annual reckonings) had always the diſtribution in this world; and, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel, they were firmly believed to have no leſs in their power in the other. Nor is it unlikely that ſome experiment in natural philoſophy, in which the Druids were great adepts, would on theſe occaſions be called in to their aid; which would not fail to procure the ſtricteſt obſervance to every ſyllable that would drop from ſuch a favourite of heaven as could work ſuch a miracle.

MOST of the religious ſervices of the Druids were probably begun

† In Procem. § 6.

* *Mur thu'irt an Sean'ar*, "As the *Sean'ar*, or man of old times, ſaid," is the ordinary preface to a great many of the Galic proverbs.

gun and ended with the ceremony of going thrice † round the circle, carn, or altar, at which they were performed. As theſe circumvolutions began at the eaſt-point, and followed the courſe of the ſun, ſouthward, they were called *deas-iul*, or *the way of the ſouth* ‡. Performed in this direction, they implied the earneſt deſire of the worſhippers, that every thing might proſper and go well with them. They likewiſe implied the readineſs of every perſon who performed the ceremony to follow the will of God, in the ſame manner as they did the ſun, which was conſidered as his image. On the contrary, the *car-tua'iul*, or going round the circle *northward*, was held diſaſtrous, even to a proverb; and the Druid could not pronounce on any perſon a greater imprecation.

THE ceremony of *deas'iul* is ſtill uſed on many occaſions in the Highlands of Scotland. Women with child go thrice, in this direction, round ſome chapels, to procure an eaſy delivery. Sick perſons do the ſame, round ſome *carns*, to charm back health. Out of certain wells, water is taken up in the name of any perſon whoſe recovery is doubtful; and his fate is prognoſticated from the turn that the water takes in the cup, when lifted. The iſſue ſeldom failed of gaining the well additional credit; for the hopes or fears of the patient, with the care or neglect of his attendants, were generally ſufficient to verify the prediction, by which they were always influenced. This was more eſpecially the caſe when the water had taken the *tua'l* turn, as the fears of men are generally more

† *Three* was a ſacred number with moſt ancient nations. See Ovid. 7. 189. Virg. ecl. 8. 73.---Ariſtotle and Plutarch ſay it was held myſterious, as it comprehended the beginning, middle, and end.

‡ From *deas* "the ſouth," and *iul* "way." How ancient this practice was, we may judge from a quotation in Athenæus, from Poſſidonius, a much older writer, l. 4. p. 154.

more prepollent than their hopes, when their fate hangs in a doubtful ſcale.—The phraſe is ſtill more uſed in converſation, than the ceremony is in practice. If the milk or meat which he ſwallows come but a little againſt the breath of a child, his nurſe is immediately alarmed leſt it may go *tua'l*, and pronounces the word *deas-iul* to give it the right direction. On numberleſs other occaſions this word is uſed in the ſame manner.

BEFORE we loſe ſight of the Druids in their ſacerdotal capacity, we may remark that they were ſometimes conſulted with regard to futurity †. Hence they had the name of *Faidhe'* *, or "Prophets." As they graſped at every thing that rendered the people more dependent on them, or that brought any acceſſion of power to their order, we need not wonder to ſee them lay hold of this engine, which had ſo great an influence over the mind, and which they would manage with their uſual addreſs and cunning. Their intimate acquaintance with the ſtate of affairs, ariſing from their own obſervation, and, no doubt, from ſecret intelligence; their knowledge of human nature, and of the ſprings of human actions; joined to their acquaintance with hiſtory, and long experience, might enable them to form a ſhrewd conjecture of any matter with regard to which they were conſulted. Accordingly, we are told that their predictions were founded on ſuch conjectures, as much as on any rules of augury ‡. Theſe, as practiſed by the Greek and Roman prieſts, were too mean a quarry for the Druids to ſtoop to, at leaſt in the time of their proſperity and power. With regard,

† Oſſian in Comala: "Why didſt thou not tell me he would fall, &c."—See alſo Cathlava, "What ſeeſt thou, &c."

* Hence came the *Vates* of the Latins. Vid. P. Mela, 3. 1.

‡ Cicer. de Divinat. l. 1. c. 41.

regard, however, to their merit on this head, no preciſe judgment can be formed, as hiſtory furniſhes but a very few inſtances of their predictions †. Only we may obſerve, that the Druids of this country ſeem to have eſtabliſhed their character pretty well in this reſpect, before they could give riſe to the notion of *the ſecond ſight*, the belief of which prevailed for ſo long a time in the Highlands. But upon the whole, the rule of *Euripides* might be applied to them, as well as to all other ſuch pretenders to the art: "The beſt gueſſer is always the beſt prophet."

CHAP. III.

Of the DRUIDS *conſidered as Magiſtrates; with ſome account of their Laws and Judicial Procedure.*

THE ſecond light in which we propoſed to view the Druids was that of magiſtrates, or of lawgivers and judges. For though they did at times delegate a part of this authority on others, who had ſometimes the name of Magiſtrates, and ſometimes the title of Kings*; yet this ſeems to have been done, only to avoid too much fatigue in ſome caſes, and too much odium in others. The Druids firmly held the real, whoever was inveſted with the nominal authority. Every cauſe of importance came before them, and

† We find the Druids or Druideſſes conſulted by the emperors Severus and Aurelian; the latter of whom was informed by them, that his family would one day give place to that of Claudius. And Diocleſian, when only a private ſoldier, was told that he ſhould one day be emperor.

* Cæſ. l. 7. Chryſoſt. Orat. 49.

and there lay no appeal from their deciſion. If any perſon whatever did not acquieſce in it, he drew, by that means, on himſelf the ſentence of excommunication; which, in the ſhape it bore among them, was juſtly held more terrible than any death †. It ſeldom failed to cruſh the wretch on whom it fell. Shut out from all intercourſe with ſociety, denied every office of humanity, and execrated and ſhunned as a contagion or plague, he was glad to ſeek that ſhelter in death, which in life he could nowhere find. Nay, even in that laſt refuge of the miſerable, it was firmly believed ſuch perſons could find no ſanctuary. The ſentence of the Druids, if not repealed, was ſuppoſed to purſue them to the other world, where it was to take place again, with many additional circumſtances of terror.—Such was the anathema of the Druids; which, to preſerve its awe, we may ſuppoſe, would be executed but ſeldom. Indeed their authority was ſo abſolute, that there would be little occaſion for it. Nobody would be ſo daring as to conteſt with them, nor ſo refractory as to refuſe their dictates the moſt implicit obedience.

Of the laws of the Celts or Druids no very particular account can be given, for no code of theirs is come down to our times. Like their religion, they held them too ſacred to be committed to writing; and tradition has not done them that juſtice, which a few remains of them ſhew they deſerved. Their laws reſpecting ſtrangers, and the rules of hoſpitality, which diſcover a greatneſs of mind, and a ſpirit of humanity, ſuperior perhaps to all other nations of antiquity, may be taken as inſtances.—To all ſtrangers every houſe was to be open, and every table free *. They were

† Cæſ. l. 6. c. 13.

* Tac. Germ. c. 1. Cæſ. l. 6. &c.

further to inquire, at their departure, what things they ſtood in need of, or wherein their hoſt might ſerve them †. Whoever failed in any of theſe points was not only abhorred by all his acquaintance, but fined or puniſhed ſeverely by the magiſtrate. Thus, among the *Burgundians*, long after the Celtic conſtitution had been ſhaken, and the fortunes of that people declining, we find it enacted, that any perſon convicted of any failure in hoſpitality ſhould be fined in three crowns; and in double that ſum, if he ſhould direct a ſtranger to the houſe of a Roman. If any perſon offered an injury or even a ſlight to a ſtranger, the Celtic laws directed to puniſh him on the ſpot ‡. They alſo puniſhed the murder of a ſtranger with death; whilſt a number of cattle under the name of *eric* or ranſom, or at the moſt baniſhment, generally atoned for the killing of one of their own nation §. Nay, ſo ſacred were the laws of hoſpitality held by them, that in caſe of any extremity, a man was to riſk his own life in the defence of a ſtranger who had truſted himſelf to his protection *. They carried their delicacy in this reſpect

† Dio. Sicul. l. 5. Tac. ubi ſupra. Oſſian, paſſim.

‡ Ariſtot. Mir. &c. apud Stob. Serm. 165.—Mortalium omnium erga hoſpites humaniſſimi. Procop. de Ædif. l. 3.

§ The *eric*, or ranſom of any perſon, was aſcertained by his quality or birth. In the Scottiſh laws of *Regiam Majeſtatem*, we find that one hundred and forty cows was the *eric* of an earl; one hundred, that of an earl's ſon, or thane; and ſixteen, of a *villain*, or plebeian. Reg. Majeſt. l. 4. 24.—The words *cro* and *galmes* in the code are Galic (*crobh* and *geal-meas*), and ſignify *cows* and *eſtimate*. Tacitus tells us, that the ſame cuſtom prevailed among the ancient Germans. "Luitur homicidium certo armentorum ac pecorum numero; pars civitati, pars propinquis."

* Of this the Gepidæ, deſcendants of the ancient Celts, afford us a remarkable inſtance. The emperor Juſtinian, and the king of the Lombards, after they had concluded a peace with both, demanded of them a noble refugee who had fled to them for ſanctuary. Upon this, a council of the Gepidæ was called; who unanimouſly declared, that it were better their whole nation, man, woman, and child, ſhould periſh

reſpect ſo far, that for fear of awakening the remembrance of any old feuds that might have ſubſiſted between the families of the entertainer and his gueſt, they were forbidden to aſk either the name or country of the latter, till it was done, in exchanging ſome token of friendſhip with him, at his departure *. The traces of theſe cuſtoms, tho' now ſomewhat faint, were ſtrongly marked, not very far back, in all the Highlands of Scotland.

THESE Celtic laws and cuſtoms give a credibility to ſeveral paſſages in Oſſian, which many have conſidered as no more than extravagant flights of the poet; ſuch as the conſtant cuſtom of inviting the enemy to the feaſt, "before they lift the ſpear," with other inſtances of the like generoſity. The Celts are indeed ſometimes charged with cruelty to their enemies; but if we conſider two maxims, or laws, which ſeem to have always regulated their conduct, at leaſt in this country, we may be inclined to give it rather the appellation of bravery. In the firſt place, they never fought till their offers of peace had been refuſed; and in the next, they ne-

periſh, than ſuch a ſacrilegious requeſt ſhould be complied with. Procop. Hiſt. Goth. l. 3. c. 35. l. 4. c. 27.

* If the entertainer was opulent, and that the gueſt choſe to remain with him ſo long, the expiration of a year and a day, and no leſs, gave a title to aſk theſe queſtions. Incredible as this cuſtom may now appear, it was not long ago obſerved to the utmoſt in many families in the Highlands. *Donacha rua na fèile*, a Campbell of Glenlyon, brought it down in his family almoſt to the memory of ſome who are yet alive. The ſtory of an Iriſh bard who made the experiment, is well known. After ſtaying the year and day, he aſked of his hoſt (who had gone to conduct him ſo far on the way, and get his name) the gift of his horſe and plaid. It was here as among the old Germans: "Abeunti, ſi quid popoſceris, concedere moris." Both were cheerfully given him. The bard acknowledged the favour by a few verſes, in which he told this father of hoſpitality, that

"None but himſelf could be his parallel."

If the ſpirit which inſpired the ancient bards had not then been dead, this ſecond Cathmor could never die.

Of

ver engaged their enemies, even when thus compelled, with a ſuperiority of numbers *. Thus they were often under the neceſſity, either of killing, or of being killed, as the cuſtom of giving and receiving quarter was not, of old, ſo common as probably our Celts could have wiſhed it.

A PEOPLE whoſe laws had ſo friendly an aſpect upon ſtrangers and enemies, may be ſuppoſed to have taken no leſs precaution to maintain good order among themſelves †. But inſtead of tracing out any of theſe, which, like the tenets of their religion, would be found extremely ſimple and few, it may ſuffice to obſerve, that the three grand articles formerly mentioned, namely, the reverencing the Deity, abſtaining from all evil, and behaving valiantly, were probably the ſum of the Druidical law, as well as doctrine. Under one or other of theſe was comprehended every thing that related to religion, polity, or war; and it was no burden to any perſon's memory to keep them all in remembrance.

As

* Of theſe rules, frequent inſtances occur in Oſſian's poems. See *Battle of Lora*, and the Poem of *Manos*, in the following Collection. But a more inconteſtible evidence of theſe maxims being attended to, is, that they have paſſed into two proverbs ſtill well known in the Galic. The firſt, importing That the ſtrong ſhould always be merciful, is *Cha d'thug Fionn riabh blar gun chumha*. And the ſecond, implying That even enemies ſhould have juſtice, is *Cothrom*, or *Combrag na Feine*. This is generally tranſlated, in Oſſian, *the equal combat*, or *the combat of heroes*.

† As Juſtice is the firſt cardinal virtue, and the baſis of all ſociety, not only the laws, but alſo the religion, of the Druids, paid the moſt particular regard to it. Thus they taught, that if any neglected to pay their debts, and fulfil all their engagements and promiſes, in this world, they would be craved and purſued on that ſcore, in the next, where it might not be ſo eaſy for them to clear it; and, accordingly, the accounts or writs, when there were any, were burnt or buried with the creditor. Pomp. Mela, de Sit. Orb. l. 5.

This doctrine or cuſtom had no unfriendly aſpect to ſociety. It enlivened their faith in a future ſtate; and encouraged the rich to lend to the poor, in hopes of being paid where they, in their turn, might be in need.

As it was the province of the Druids to enact, explain, and enforce, ſo it was alſo their buſineſs to take cognizance of the breach or neglect of theſe laws, and to judge both of the crime and of its puniſhment. In this, as in every other caſe, their power appears exorbitant; though they may have probably exerted it with the ſtricteſt juſtice and lenity †.

WHEN at any time a ſeverity in puniſhing became neceſſary, the Druids, with wonderful addreſs, turned over the blame, either upon the magiſtrate, who had little more in his power than the odious taſk of delating the delinquent and being his accuſer; or upon heaven itſelf, which was pretended, and, from the artifice uſed, believed to direct their judgment, and give a ſanction to their deciſion. Hence, their ſentence, from the ſimple name *breith*, or "judgment," came to be called *breith-neimhe*, "the judgment of heaven *;" which, with little or no variation, is ſtill the term in the Galic language to expreſs the deciſion of any court, and even the laſt judgment ‡.

ONE of the *holy frauds*, and perhaps the chief, made uſe of on theſe occaſions, was the *gabha-bheil*, "the jeopardy or trial of Beil," practiſed in dubious or dangerous caſes. Of this it may be proper to give ſame account.

WE have already obſerved, that the Druids held annual aſſizes in the moſt centrical parts of every country, to decide all difficult controverſies, whether of a public or private nature, to hear every appeal from inferior courts, and receive any charge that might be brought from the cenſors or magiſtrates. On theſe occaſions, as the name and the remains of the cuſtom ſtill ſhew, it was cuſtomary

† Druidæ juſtiſſimi, &c. Strab. l. 4.
* Toland's Miſcel.
‡ *Breitheneas.*

mary to kindle a large fire, called *Samh'in*, or *the fire of peace*, on the conſecrated hill or *carn* at which they met. When an eaſy and ſatisfactory deciſion could not otherwiſe be obtained, the trial of the panel's innocence was reſted on his walking thrice, barefooted, through ſome large tract of the live aſhes and coals of this holy fire *. If he eſcaped unhurt, heaven atteſted his innocence; if he did not, it was the *breith-neimhe*, or *judgment of heaven*, that he was guilty, and ſhould be condemned. Previous to this, however, the Druids took all poſſible pains to inveſtigate the truth, and, as they ſaw cauſe, determined beforehand what ſhould be *the heavenly deciſion*, and the fate of the panel. They themſelves are ſaid to have been acquainted with a kind of oil, which allowed them to be pretty familiar with fire †, that all might be ſatisfied of their innocency. In the ceremony, which they always uſed, of bathing the feet of every perſon who was to paſs through the fire, this antidote was adminiſtered, or not, according as it was thought he deſerved. The ſpectators, who never ſuppoſed the bath to be any other than water, could not help being aſtoniſhed when at any time they ſaw the miraculous deliverance; and if they ſhould ſee it but in a few inſtances, would always be convinced of the infallibility of the judgment, whatever was the iſſue. We may ſuppoſe, however, that in order to preſerve the credit of this miracle, it would be uſed but ſeldom, and more from neceſſity than from oſtentation.

THIS *gabha-bheil*, or "jeopardy of Be'il," is ſtill the Galic word to denote any danger of the moſt dreadful kind. If any perſon has had a remarkable deliverance either from fire or water, he is ſaid to

* Vid. Sil. Ital. infra citat. & Plin. l. 7. c. 2.

† Vid. Serv. ex Varr. in Æneid. xi. 785.

to have come thro', or out of, *gabha-bheil*. From this cuſtom came, probably, the ordeals by fire and water, which we read of in latter times. And it is not unlikely, that St Paul, the apoſtle of the Gentiles, who might have ſeen this cuſtom practiſed in ſome of thoſe countries he travelled through, may allude to it when he ſpeaks of ſome that ſhall be ſaved, *yet ſo as by fire* *. The meaning at leaſt is preciſely the ſame with what is affixed in Galic to *gabha-bheil*, which is The running ſuch a dreadful hazard, that one's ſafety or eſcape from it is an aſtoniſhing miracle.

As the Celts were the firſt inhabitants of Italy, and the Druids its firſt prieſts, under the name of *Curetes*, they left there ſome traces behind them of this cuſtom, to which we find ſome alluſions in the Latin poets. On mount *Soracte*, in the country of the *Sabines* †, *Be'il*, or, to ſpeak in the Roman ſtyle, *Apollo*, had an *acervus* or *carn*, on which this ceremony for a long time continued to be performed; and the family of the Hirpins, who underſtood and practiſed the myſtery, enjoyed all the immunities of our Druids, by decree of the Roman ſenate ‡. The following paſſages of Virgil §, put with great propriety in the mouth of *Aruns*, who was of this family, and another to the ſame purpoſe in Silius Italicus ¶, are

* 1 Cor. iii. 15.

† The Sabines were the deſcendants of the Umbrians, who were the moſt ancient people of Italy, and of the race of the Gauls or Celts.---Comp. Dion. Halicarn. Ant. Rom. l. 1.---Plin. iii. 14. Flor. i. 17. Solin. Polyhiſt. c. 8. &c.

‡ Plin. vii. 2.

§ Æn. xi. ubi ſupra.

¶ Tum Soracte ſatum, præſtantem corpore et armis
Æquanum noſcens; patrio cui ritus in arvo,
Dum pius Arcitenens incenſis gaudet Acervis,
Exta *ter* innocuos *late* portare per ignes:
Sic in Apollinea ſemper veſtigia, prunâ
Inviolata teras; victorque vaporis, ad aras
Dona ferenato feras ſolennia Phœbo.
Sil. Ital. v. 175.

are plain deſcriptions of the *gabha-bheil* or Druidical cuſtom we are ſpeaking of, which is the beſt commentary to explain them.

" O patron of Soracte's high abodes,
" Phœbus, thou ruling pow'r among the gods!
" Whom firſt we ſerve; whole woods of unctuous pine
" Burn on thy heap, and to thy glory ſhine;
" By thee protected, with our naked ſoles
" Through flames unſing'd we paſs, and tread the kindled coals.
" Give me, propitious Pow'r, to waſh away
" The ſtains of this diſhonourable day. DRYDEN.

THE trial being over, and the truth, as was ſuppoſed, ſufficiently expiſcated, ſuch criminals as were thought too infamous to live were immediately put to death; and the manner of their execution was, in all likelihood, what gave occaſion to ſuch as were neither well acquainted with the Druids, nor well affected to their order, to aſſert that they offered human ſacrifices. What gave this aſſertion a colour of probability was, that theſe wretches were put to death by the perſons who always preſided at ſacrifices; on the *carn* or altar conſecrated to their deity; and on the occaſion of celebrating one of his moſt ſolemn feſtivals. Although a ſtranger had been diſpoſed to relate the truth with the greateſt impartiality, every circumſtance here had a tendency to deceive him, and to make him ſuppoſe theſe devoted criminals were actually human ſacrifices. In one ſenſe, indeed, they were ſo; ſacrifices to the peace and order of ſociety, the maintaining of which was, as has been already obſerved, the very end and deſign of that feſtival. The Druids alſo, like good magiſtrates, zealous for ſuppreſſing vice and puniſhing the guilty, might with great propriety ſay, that the putting of a criminal

minal to death was a moſt acceptable ſacrifice to the Deity, and a means of averting his diſpleaſure *. From all this what could a ſtranger infer, but that the perſon was literally ſacrificed? That a prieſt ſhould be the executioner of juſtice, the puniſhing of a criminal a religious ſervice, and attended with the ſame ceremony as the offering up of a victim, would be things too new to him to have any other idea. This account of the matter further correſponds with what Cæſar tells us, when he ſays that the Druids held criminals to be the moſt acceptable victims †; and we may venture to affirm, that when theſe were wanting, the innocent ſeldom or never ſupplied their room.

SOME further hints of this apology for the Druids may be gathered even from their accuſers. Cæſar ſays theſe victims were burnt amidſt branches of trees woven, or heaped together; which was the very death given to the criminals we ſpeak of, who were thus conſumed in the holy *pacific fire*, or *ſamh'in*, above mentioned. Here we find no mention of the knife, the altar, or the blood of the victim; on the ſhedding of which the chief ſtreſs was laid in moſt animal ſacrifices. Inſtead of that, they were caſt alive into the fire §. And Tacitus obſerves of the Germans ‡, who had the ſame cuſtoms and the ſame religion, that over ſuch infamous criminals as we ſpeak of a heap of every kind of rubbiſh was raiſed in token of the people's abhorrence. Now this was the conſtant uſage of

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* Hence the office of executioner is ſaid to be ſtill in high repute among the Germans. Anc. Un. Hiſt. *Of the Germ.*

† Cæſ. l. 6. c. 16.

§ Ib. & Strab. l. 4.

‡. c. 12.---Cæſar ſays the Germans had no Druids; but Tacitus, who knew them better, plainly means this order when he ſpeaks of their prieſts. Probably they were then in a great meaſure ſuppreſſed, or forced to take ſhelter under ſome other name. Still, however, the bards in that country ſeem to have retained their name and office. Vid. c. 3. init.

the Druids after they had burnt the criminals in the manner we have deſcribed; and ſeems to prove plainly, that Cæſar and Tacitus ſpeak of the ſame thing; the victims of the one being the malefactors of the other. To which we may add, that the latter reſtricts the offering of human ſacrifices to certain days only, which we may ſuppoſe to have been the aſſizes we have ſpoken of; and alſo that the *carn*, or, as he would imagine it, the *Mercurial heap*, on which they were held, led him to think they had been offered to Mercury.

BUT we do not build ſo much upon theſe hints, as upon the much clearer evidence of ſeveral expreſſions ſtill in uſe in the Galic or Celtic language, which ſhew that this was not a ſacrifice, but only an execution of criminals; and that the heaps or mounts, ſo frequent in many places, were raiſed in this manner over them. To this day, the Galic term for an *outlaw*, or one whoſe life is forfeited to public juſtice on account of any crime, is *fear air charn*, "a man upon a carn;" and in ſpeaking of ſuch a perſon, *the e air charn*, "he is upon a carn." Theſe expreſſions have a manifeſt alluſion to the Druidicial cuſtom of which we are ſpeaking, and to the mode of judging and puniſhing criminals upon theſe *cairns* in the manner above deſcribed. After the execution of this ſentence, the heap was increaſed by a new ſtratum of ſtones and rubbiſh, to which every one preſent contributed his ſhare, both to ſhew his approbation of the judgment and his deteſtation of the crime *. This procedure is confirmed by the bones and aſhes found (ſometimes with, and ſometimes without, ſtone-coffins) at different depths in the ſame *carn*, and

* See 2 Sam. xviii. 17. Joſh. vii. 26, &c.—Lapidation was anciently a common mode of puniſhment.

and alſo in different quarters of it. We have likewiſe ſeveral expreſſions of the imprecatory kind which tend to elucidate this cuſtom. *'Soil leam nach raibh do luath fui' charn*, and *B'fhear leam e bhi fui' charn chlach*, are forms of malediction that wiſh one *under a heap of ſtones*, and one's *aſhes under a cairn;* expreſſions that obviouſly allude to the Druidical procedure with regard to criminals. To this we may add, that the *Welſh* alſo call theſe heaps *Carn-vraduyr*, and *Carn-lhadron*, " thief and traitor's carns;" and that they have likewiſe an imprecation, *Kern ar dy ben*, to the ſame purpoſe with theſe juſt now mentioned. Here every thing alludes to the execution of criminals; nothing to the offering up of human ſacrifices.

We muſt not, however, conceal, that there is in the Galic another proverb, very oppoſite in its meaning to theſe juſt now mentioned. It is *Cuiri' mi clach ad' charn*, or " I will put a ſtone in thy carn;" intimating that this was an act of friendſhip*. But theſe oppoſite proverbs in the ſame language tend only to ſhew, that the ſame ceremony had, at different times, a different meaning. In the infancy of ſociety, " before the light of the ſong aroſe," a carn was raiſed over the reſpected dead †, to keep his memory alive, and to preſerve his aſhes from inſult. The heath or graſs with which ſome of theſe heaps have been found overgrown, ſo that they have been diſcovered only by accident, ſhew them to be

* Whether any carn was deſigned as a mark of infamy or reſpect, it was cuſtomary with every paſſenger to contribute ſomething to its augmentation. Hence the ſize of ſuch carns as happened to be near any place of much reſort came ſoon to be very enormous.---The Mercurial heaps in Greece were augmented in the ſame manner by the contribution of paſſengers. Dydimus ad Odyſſ. π.

† In very ancient times this *monumental load* was in like manner uſed as a mark of reſpect in the Eaſtern countries; for Andromache tells of her father, that

" They laid him decent on the funeral pile,
" Then rais'd a mountain where his bones were laid."
Il. 6.

of this earlieſt period, and far prior in time to others that have not this " moſs of years" for their covering. The ſtones of ſome of them appear to have been carried from an immenſe diſtance; a tribute which nothing could exact, but that high reſpect and love which was due to the good and brave head of his people. Arrow-heads of flint which have been found in ſome of theſe, and which have been uſed when metal was ſcarce or not invented in theſe countries, prove them to be of the moſt remote antiquity. The horn of a deer, or ſome piece of armour, the ſymbol of the amuſement or occupation of the deceaſed; a piece of glaſs, or ſome ſuch trinket, placed there, perhaps to deck them in the other world; are generally found in the oldeſt kind of *carns*, which owed their origin to love and eſteem.

In proceſs of time, however, when ſociety was ſomewhat farther advanced, this cuſtom of burning the body of the dead and raiſing ſuch a monument over it was laid aſide, as the circumſtances which gave riſe to it ceaſed to operate †. A ſimpler mode of burying, leſs ſhocking to humanity, was adopted; and the memory of perſons and events was intruſted to tradition and to the ſong of the bard, as to a more diſtinct and permanent monument. The pain of burning ſoon ſuggeſted a ſevere mode of puniſhing criminals, and the *carn* was uſed as a beacon to caution others againſt the

† It was probably the dread of having their remains abuſed by barbarous enemies that induced men at firſt in any country to burn the dead. Thus, among the Romans, Sylla was the firſt of his family who ordered his body to be burnt, leſt the barbarities he had committed on that of Marius ſhould be retaliated on his own. Cic. de leg. l. 2.

The Iſraelites, in like manner, departed from their common mode of interring, to burn Saul and his ſons, to prevent their bodies being abuſed by the Philiſtines. Gen. xxiii. 4. with 1 Sam. xxxi. 12.

the like danger. In the *carns* of this æra, the ſymbols above-mentioned are wanting; and nothing but bones, aſhes, and charcoal, is found in them; which ſeems to afford an internal proof for what purpoſe they were intended.

IN a ſtill later period, the Danes, during their invaſion, as they were in a hoſtile country, and much in the ſame ſituation with ſome of thoſe tribes who firſt planted it, applied *carns* to their original uſe of preſerving the memory of their chieftains, and ſecuring their body or aſhes from inſult *. It is probable the cuſtom of raiſing heaps over criminals had by this time been long in diſuſe, and that the proverb of *cuirdh mi clach ad charn*, or "I will put a ſtone in thy heap," was a phraſe uſed by ſome of the dejected natives, when they would ſupplicate any favour from theſe mercileſs intruders. The expreſſion ſoothed their pride, and fell in with the natural paſſion all men have for fame, which in this caſe was to be had in no other ſhape, as no Britiſh bard would proſtitute his muſe to praiſe an unjuſt invader.

BUT to return to what gave riſe to this account of *carns*. The obſervations which have been made on thoſe of the intermediate kind, and the proverbs which have been mentioned with regard to them and to the puniſhment of criminals, ſeem plainly to ſhew how the Druids came to be charged with ſacrificing their ſpecies. Perſons who could know but little of them, and who ſeem reſolved to

* Towards the beginning of this period, which we may call the *interregnum* between Druidiſm and Chriſtianity, theſe countries ſeem to have been in their greateſt barbariſm. The antipathy between the natives and their invaders ſeems to have been ſo inveterate, that their revenge ſometimes penetrated into the ſanctuary of the grave itſelf. The expreſſion of *Dhurichde' tu mo lua' le uiſge*, "You could wiſh to ſee my aſhes ſtrewed on a ſtream," intimates that the horrid deed has been ſometimes done.

† This

to misrepresent and traduce them, had, in the circumstances above mentioned, a very plausible foundation for this charge. And even supposing them impartial, every circumstance had such a tendency to mislead them, that the path of truth could not easily be found. Add to this what has been said before with regard to the character of the Druids, who were famed for their wisdom and humanity, and the observations made on the general strain of their sacrifices, which appeared to have been more of the vegetable than of the animal kind; and it will amount to a high degree of evidence, that on this head they were *not guilty*. Even as a punishment on criminals, they would seldom put in practice the severe mode we have been speaking of; as they had so many other engines to work with, that this one, so unwieldy and dangerous, could rarely be needed.

The Druids neglected no means of increasing their own authority and keeping society in obedience and awe. Not satisfied, therefore, with exercising the judicial power, and distributing all rewards and punishments in this world, they pretended, and were firmly believed, to have an equal power of influencing mens happiness or misery in the next. This appears from some of their funeral customs, the traces of which are still remaining. Whenever any person died, a portion of earth and salt was immediately laid on the corpse †; the one the emblem of the corruptibility of the body, the other of the incorruptibility of the soul. A sacred court seem to have sat upon the deceased, in order to determine his character, from their own observation, and the testimony of his neighbours who had access, on all occasions, to be acquainted with him*.

† This ceremony is still practised by many who can give no reason for it.

him *. On the iſſue of this inquiry it depended what funeral honours ſhould be paid to the dead. If his character was ſuch as greatly diſtinguiſhed him; or if he had been the author of any uſeful invention, or eminent in the practice of any art; it was recorded in the ſong, and ſome ſymbol of it placed in the tomb with his body; eſpecially while the cuſtom of raiſing *carns* continued in force. Hence (perhaps, as much as to ſerve them in the other world) arms, amber, glaſs, cryſtal, needles, and ſuch things, have been found with the aſhes and urns in theſe monuments.

WITH regard to the immortal part, the ſoul, this alſo muſt receive its ſentence from the tribunal of the Druids. If the perſon had acted his part well in life, and acquitted himſelf honourably in the diſcharge of the three grand articles of their law, his ſpirit was pronounced happy, and the bard ſung its *requiem* to the harp, which was ſuppoſed to give it a paſſport to *Fla'innis*, or Paradiſe. Hence, in the poems of Oſſian, though the court had then ceaſed to ſit, we find heroes ſo eager to obtain the funeral ſong. However well they had deſerved of their country, their ghoſts, till this was pronounced, were ſuppoſed to be excluded from the place of bliſs, and to wander, pale and ſad, on the miſt of ſome marſh or fen. Not ſmall, therefore, was the cauſe of that mournful complaint which we find their apparitions ſometimes making to the bard when they "had not yet received their fame."

IF, on the other hand, the iſſue of the inquiry was unfavourable to

* The like cuſtom prevailed among the ancient Egyptians.---Still the firſt thing which a Highlander commonly ſays, on the death of any perſon, is ſomething by way of ſtricture on his character, and always favourable. One expreſſion in particular is ſeldom omitted, in ſpeaking of the dead; *A chuid do dh'aras da! i. e.* "May he have his ſhare of paradiſe!"

to the dead, and that he was found to have lived in the neglect or breach of any of the three grand laws of the Druids, his ſentence was the reverſe, and his lot was aſſigned him in the horrors of the dark and cold *Iurin*.

IT may well be ſuppoſed, that the relations of the dead would be greatly affected with joy or ſorrow, according to the reſpective determinations of this inquiry of the Druids. When the ſentence was favourable, the greateſt rejoicings inſtantly took place. When otherwiſe, the ſorrow was equally great; and, in either caſe, they who would bear the chief part, and would be moſt affected, would be the neareſt friends.

IN ſome of the Highlands of Scotland, and in ſome parts of Ireland, this cuſtom has been very lately practiſed, and is hardly yet extinct. In the Highlands, the neareſt relation is the firſt to lead, on theſe occaſions, the dance and the ſong. Theſe, however, have always been of a graver and more ſolemn kind than what have been uſed on their ordinary merry-meetings. From the air and ſtyle of ſome of theſe compoſitions, which are not unfrequent in the poems of Oſſian, we may form ſome opinion of what they have been from their earlieſt æra. They ſeem to have been all admirably ſuited to thoſe mournfully-pleaſant emotions which that poet emphatically calls "the joy of grief."

IN the remains of this cuſtom there is one remarkable circumſtance which deſerves our notice. Among the Caledonians, the ceremony was perpetually of the joyful kind, in all the parts of their country in which it has been known to be practiſed. Nothing can be a ſtronger argument, that the morals of the ancient inhabitants of theſe countries were, in general, of the moſt exalted kind. Inſtances

ſtances of vitious perſons appear to have been ſo rare, that when the judges ceaſed to ſit, the cuſtom, from the general prevalency of the joyful part, and the paucity of inſtances to the contrary, aſſumed its colour entirely from the brighter ſide; and, though much againſt the natural current of the paſſions, made its way down to our times in the rejoicing channel.

THE inhabitants of Ireland, on the other hand, whoſe muſic had always a mournful elegiac caſt, were naturally led to take the doleful ſide of the cuſtom. Hence, in their funeral ſongs, the *Coronach*, *Ululaith*, or lamentation, came to be the moſt common. The two different ceremonies, however, which the two nations have thus ſplit between them, are but the two branches of the one old Druidical cuſtom of judging the fate of the dead from their conduct while alive.

IT is eaſy to conceive what a happy effect this practice muſt have had upon ſociety. By keeping futurity conſtantly in view, with all its joys and terrors, an attention to conduct, and a deſire to excel, would always be kept alive in every breaſt. The thought of having his fame and final ſtate decided, in a great meaſure, by the teſtimony which his neighbours gave of a man's character, would be a conſtant check upon every inclination to harm, and a perpetual ſource of good and great actions. Theſe were the only avenue to the fame of the ſong, and to the felicity of Paradiſe.

As to the conveyance of ſouls to their reſpective abodes after their ſentence was paſſed, this was believed to have been performed by ſome appearances in nature, which the Druids made probably a ſhift, at times, to counterfeit. In general, however, it is moſt likely they waited till theſe appearances were produced by

natural cauſes. Thunder, lightning, dark clouds, and the noxious vapours of ſome fenny lake, in which they muſt have waited for ſqually winds to drive them, formed the vehicle of condemned ſpirits. The more lovely and beneficent meteors, the rays of the ſun and moon, the rainbow, and the like, were the medium of conveyance allotted for thoſe who deſerved better *.

A MORE diſtinguiſhing reſpect was pretended by the Druids to be ſhewn on this occaſion to themſelves, who always paſſed for peculiar favourites of heaven. A bright ſtar was ſent down on purpoſe to conduct their ſouls to paradiſe. To this day, the ſhooting of a ſtar gliding lambent along the blue vault, is called in Galic *dreug;* and the vulgar no ſooner ſee it, than they immediately expect to hear of the death of ſome great and good perſon. This notion muſt have originated from the ſource juſt now mentioned; the word *dreug* being only an abbreviation of *drui'eug*, which ſignifies " the death of a Druid."—The tradition of the fiery car, on which the good Enoch mounted up to heaven, which, with many other of their religious notions, the Druids might have carried with them in their migrations from the eaſt, was perhaps the firſt thing that ſuggeſted theſe fancies. Once ſet on foot, they were eaſily kept up by the vulgar, ever fond of the marvellous, and always prone to ſuperſtition.

SOME have ſuppoſed the tranſmigration of ſouls to have been a tenet of the Druids, and delivered by them to Pythagoras, who firſt introduced it into the mythology of the Grecians †. But this opinion ſeems to be without foundation, and indeed has been generally

* Vid. Oſſian paſſim. Plut. ap. Euſeb. ubi ſup. Rudbec. Olai. Atlant. &c.
† Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 6. Euſeb. præp. x. 2.

rally exploded. It is quite inconſiſtent with the cuſtom which we have been juſt now deſcribing, and with the whole ſyſtem of the Druidical religion; which could never have that influence it had upon the heart, if men had any ſuſpicions of paſſing into vegetables or animals when they died. Pythagoras found this ſtrange notion in India; and his ſervant Zamolxis might perhaps import it to Thracia *, his native country, and ſome other places: but, among the Druids, the belief of it never prevailed.

As it was, however, one of their tenets, that the world underwent a renovation at certain periods by fire and water alternately †, it is not improbable that they might indulge the wretched, on theſe occaſions, a chance of entering into new bodies, in which they might poſſibly have it in their power to make amends for their former miſconduct. In the Galic language, there is nothing that alludes to tranſmigration, unleſs it be meant of theſe periods of general tranſmutation, when almoſt every thing was ſuppoſed to undergo a new form. There is nothing more common ſtill, than to hear it aſſerted of the moſt unlikely things, that they ſhall not happen till the *brath*, or the *dilinn*; that is, till "the conflagration or the deluge;" which may poſſibly imply, that even ſuch improbable things might then take place.

THE word *brath*, which originally ſignified "the conflagration," came by degrees, after the introduction of Chriſtianity, to denote the general judgment which is to accompany that event. The idea which is now annexed to the common expreſſion of *gu brath*, or *gu la bhrath*, is "never," or "till the day of judgment." But the compounds of the word plainly ſhew, that its original meaning

* Mela, l. 2. Solin. 10. † Strab. l. 4.

was "a conflagration," or "burning." Thus, one in the heat or flame of a paſſion, is ſaid to be *air a bhre'as* (or *bhra'theas)*, a metaphor taken from the laſt conflagration, and ſignifying literally a heat ſimilar to that terrible phenomenon.

THE other expreſſion of *gu dilinn*, or *gu tig an dilinn*, that is, "till the deluge," is alſo common in the Galic, and manifeſtly derived from this tenet of the Druids. It is curious enough to hear ſuch a period conſtantly referred to by a people who no longer believe it ſhall ever come. It is generally applied to caſes more improbable and more diſtant than the occaſions on which the other word is uſed; which ſhews, that the Druids looked for the firſt revolution to happen by fire. As they could not but have a tradition of the deluge of Noah, it is not unlikely they might alſo hear ſomething of Enoch's prophecy; and that from both theſe circumſtances, they were led to think, there might be a periodical ſucceſſion of ſuch revolutions.

CHAP. IV.

Of the PHILOSOPHY *of the* DRUIDS.

WE proceed next to conſider the Druids under the character of natural philoſophers. This was the capacity in which they moſt ſhone. Their knowledge of nature ſeems indeed to have been inferior to that of no philoſophers of any age or country whatever. It were indeed ſurpriſing if it ſhould, conſidering the many

many and peculiar advantages which they enjoyed. As they were, from time immemorial, a ſtanding order of philoſophers, they had always the experiments of a long ſeries of ages to begin with. Theſe were ſo carefully preſerved by the uninterrupted ſucceſſion of Druids, that none of them, of any conſequence, could poſſibly be loſt. None but men of genius were admitted to the order; and then, as we have ſeen above, their application was great, and their whole lifetime devoted to ſtudy. Their cuſtom of living together in ſocieties or colleges, was alſo of great ſervice to them in the proſecution of their inquiries, as they could by that means aſſiſt one another with greateſt advantage; like lamps that give a ſtronger light when all their rays are united and interchanged. We may likewiſe obſerve, that their religion and language was ſo extenſively diffuſed, that all the experiments and diſcoveries made in ſo vaſt a tract of the globe as the Celtic nation poſſeſſed, flowed in to enrich the knowledge of this order, and conveyed, like ſo many ſtreams to the ocean, large ſupplies to it from all quarters. Nor ſhould we omit, with regard to the Druids of Britain in particular, that their early commerce with the Phœnicians might procure them opportunities of learning all the ſciences in which that and ſome other eaſtern nations are ſaid to have been ſo eminent. It is not unlikely, that it was this acceſſion of foreign knowledge that rendered the Druids of Britain ſo famous; though it may be difficult to give any reaſon why they might not themſelves make as great a progreſs as any other philoſophers, when their order was ſo early eſtabliſhed, formed upon ſo wiſe and extenſive a plan, and placed upon ſo independent a footing. But however they came by it, a vaſt acquaintance with the powers of nature we are ſure they

they were poſſeſſed of. It was from this knowledge, as has been obſerved above, that they had the name of *Druidhe*', or "Druids;" which is ſtill the only term in the language for natural philoſophers or magicians, as *druidheachd*, or "druidiſm," is that for natural philoſophy or magic. Some particulars relative to this capacity of the Druids, we ſhall now endeavour to inveſtigate, both from the remains of their language, and from ancient authorities.

THAT the world was created by the Divine wiſdom and power, was a primary tenet of the Druids. This, like the Phœnicians and Egyptians, they repreſented by the emblematical figure of an egg coming out of the mouth of a ſerpent *. It was this that gave riſe to the fable of the ſerpent's egg recorded by Pliny †, and to the no leſs abſurd traditions which we ſtill meet with, concerning the *clach naithir*, or *glain' nan Druidh*', which was the cryſtal ball ſaid above to have been worn by the Druids. The vulgar, underſtanding no more of this myſtery than ſtrangers, aſcribed to that amulet all the miracles of a Taliſman in the *Arabian Night's Entertainments*; and thought it was owing to ſome ſecret charm or virtue which it was poſſeſſed of, that the Druid performed all his works of wonder. A few of theſe cryſtals are ſtill to be ſeen in the Highlands, where they have not yet loſt all their credit. Some of their owners have ſtill the weakneſs to believe, or the diſingenuity to pretend, that theſe trinkets can do almoſt every thing but raiſe the dead. If a diſtemper rages among men or beaſts, it is no uncommon thing to ſend fifty miles for this glaſs-phyſician to cure them. In general, however, men have acquired ſtrength enough to overcome theſe ridiculous ſuperſtitions. The vaſſal no longer gives implicit

* Relig. des Gaul. l. 1. c. 26. & 3. ult. † l. 29. c. 3.

plicit faith to his chieftain, though the latter is ſtill willing to confer the greateſt obligations when this can be done ſo very cheaply.

WITH the origin, the Druids taught alſo the figure and magnitude, of the earth *; but with what exactneſs there is no account left by which we can determine. To geography, we cannot ſuppoſe they could be ſtrangers. If they had loſt the accounts of their original migration from the Eaſt, yet the commerce which ſubſiſted ſo early between Britain and very remote nations would give our Druids an opportunity of knowing the ſituation of moſt of the countries at that time known.

ASTRONOMY has been likewiſe ſtudied by this order; and in the many long and hazardous voyages, which men performed in thoſe days, without any chart or compaſs but the ſtars to guide them, we have ſome proof of their ſucceſs in it. The common name for a ſtar continues ſtill be *reül*, (or *ruith-iul*) "the guide to direct the courſe." But it is not only the motion and magnitude of the heavenly bodies that the Druids are ſaid to have been acquainted with †. They ſeem to have taken a ſtill cloſer view of them, and to have been no ſtrangers even to the uſe of teleſcopes. It muſt have been by this invention that the Boreadæ (by whom *Hecateus* ‡ means the Bards or Druids) of a certain Hyperborean iſland, little leſs than Sicily, and over-againſt Celtiberia, a deſcription which exactly anſwers to Britain, could bring the moon very near them, and ſhew its opacity, with the mountains, rocks, and other appearances upon its ſurface. The manufacture of glaſs, with which the pieces of glaſs and cryſtal found in

carns

* Cæſ. l. 6. c. 14.
† Cæſ. ib.
‡ Apud Diod. Sicul. l. 3. c. 11.

carns * prove them to have been acquainted, probably led them to theſe diſcoveries. As glaſs is ſaid to have been originally an invention of the Phœnicians, and a ſtaple commodity of the city of Sidon †, it is poſſible the Britiſh Druids might, in the courſe of their dealings, learn from them the art of making, and applying it to practical and philoſophical uſes. Nay, perhaps, it were more natural to ſuppoſe, that our contemplative philoſophers were themſelves the lenders, rather thon the borrowers of this invention. The proceſs of vitrifying even the walls of their houſes, of which ſeveral remains are ſtill to be ſeen ‡, ſhews that they early practiſed the art in groſs; and it is but reaſonable to ſuppoſe they would by degrees refine and improve it. The very word *glaoine*, the Galic name for glaſs, being of Celtic, and not of foreign extract, ſeems to prove the art to have been their own. The etymology of the word ſeems to be *geala*, or *glao' theine*, that is, " glued or brightened by fire." As no people have technical terms, in their own language, for any arts to the practice of which they were ſtrangers, we may infer, that all the arts, for which we have names that are of Celtic derivation, have been practiſed by our anceſtors. This remark might lead us to a very curious inveſtigation of the arts and ſciences of the ancient Caledonians, if it did not carry us too far out of our way at preſent.

In ſpeaking of the aſtronomical knowledge of the Druids, we may obſerve, that they were acquainted with the *cycle of the ſun and moon*, the laſt of wnich is probably alluded to in the nineteen years con-

* They were probably placed there in honour of thoſe who invented or practiſed the art; to whoſe memory, we may ſuppoſe the *carn* was alſo raiſed.

† Bochart. Phaleg. l. 3. c. 35. col. 303. & Strab. l. 16.

‡ See Williams on vitrified ruins in the Highlands.

converſe of Apollo, which Hecateus ſpeaks of *. A Druidical temple in the iſland of Lewis, one of the Hebrides, bore evident marks of their ſkill in aſtronomy. Every ſtone in this temple, according to Toland †, was placed aſtronomically. The circle conſiſted of twelve equidiſtant obeliſks, denoting the twelve ſigns of the zodiac. The four cardinal points of the compaſs were marked by lines of obeliſks running out from the circle, and each point ſubdivided into four more. The range of obeliſks from the north, and exactly facing the ſouth, was double; being two parallel rows, each conſiſting of nineteen ſtones. A large ſtone in the centre of the circle, thirteen feet high, and of the perfect ſhape of a ſhip's rudder, ſeems to be a kind of ſymbol that this aſtronomical knowledge was deſigned to be ſubſervient to navigation. This perhaps may have been the *winged temple* which *Eratoſthenes* § ſays Apollo had among the Hyperboreans; the name which the firſt ſailors gave to all who lay to the north of the pillars of Hercules, or ſtraits of Gibraltar. Others ſuppoſe that famous temple to have been in the iſle of Sky, which from that circumſtance may have got the name of the *winged iſle*, or *Eilean Sciathanach*.

THAT the Druids were acquainted with the uſe of letters, admits of no manner of doubt ‡. However ſtrong or well exerciſed their memory may have been, without ſome kind of writing to aſſiſt and refreſh it, they could hardly retain ſuch a variety of copious and important ſubjects as they treated of. Theſe writings, as well as their other myſteries, they ſeem to have concealed for many ages

* Ubi ſupra, ap. Dio. Sicul.

† Miſcel. v. 1. p. 89.

§ In Opuſcul. Mythol. &c. cit. apud Toland.

‡ Cæſ. 6. 14. & Rel. des Gaul. p. 39. —Their very law of not committing their religion to writing, is a proof that writing was in uſe among them.

from the people; who probably knew nothing of them either in this country or in Gaul, till they were introduced there by the Phocæan colony, about 500 years before the Chriſtian æra ‡. Even after the invention was known, the moſt of the Celtic tribes held the ſtudy of letters in the greateſt contempt *, as they thought it tended to enervate the body, and unfit it for thoſe martial exerciſes in which they placed the greateſt glory. The Druids would do all in their power to ſtrengthen this averſion, as they found their advantage in the ignorance of the vulgar. Accordingly, to the very laſt, they never ſuffered them to commit to writing any part of their hiſtory, laws, or religion †. The chief reaſon which they gave for this was, to prevent their falling into the hands of ſtrangers; but another no leſs real was, to keep the people ignorant, and more dependent. Cæſar tells us, the characters uſed by the Druids were the Greek; if the word *Græcis*, as ſome learned men are of opinion, be not an interpolation ‡. The Greek, it is poſſible, they might be acquainted with, as it might aſſiſt them in their intercourſe with ſome nations who uſed it. The Turdetani, who are reckoned by many the moſt ancient people of Spain §, and who were certainly of the Celtic ſtock, are ſaid by Strabo ¶ to have laws written in verſe ſome thouſand years before his time. This exaggerated account of them proves at leaſt that their learning was of very great antiquity. And we may infer, that if the Druids of Celtiberia were thus early acquainted with the uſe of letters, thoſe of Britain and Gaul could not be much behind them.

That

‡ Juſt. l. 43. c. 3. * Ælian. var. hiſt. l. 8. c. 6. † Cæſ. 6. 14. Strab. l. 4. ‡ Joſ. Scalig. l. 1. epiſt. 16. & Hottoman Franco-Gall. c. 2. § Voſſ. chron. Teraph. de reg. Hiſp. ¶ l. 3.

That our Druids were poſſeſſed of letters from a very remote antiquity, ſeems very evident from our Galic or Iriſh alphabet; the ſimplicity of which, and the paucity of its letters, prove it to be exceeding old. This alphabet conſiſts exactly of the ſixteen letters which Cadmus brought from Phœnicia about 1400 years before the birth of our Saviour, with only the addition of the letter F, and the aſpirate which was expreſſed with only a dot above the line. Now, if this alphabet had not been borrowed at leaſt before the time of the Trojan war, when Palamedes made the firſt addition to it, we can hardly conceive it ſhould be ſo ſimple. Or if the Druids ſhould cull it, it would be remarkable that they ſhould hit preciſely on the letters of Cadmus, and reject none but the later additions. To this we may add, that they could much eaſier ſpare one of Cadmus's letters, than ſome of thoſe which have been afterwards joined to it. The Greek *x*, for example, expreſſes a ſound ſo common in the Galic, and ſo imperfectly expreſſed by the combined powers of *c* (or *k*) and *h*, that they could not poſſibly omit it, if it had been in the alphabet when they had adopted the reſt of their letters. So far would they be from leaving it out, that it is rather a wonder they never thought of inventing ſuch a letter, to avoid the neceſſity of making perpetual ſubſtitutions for it. Theſe reaſons ſpeak the alphabet under conſideration to be ſo old, that we may ſuppoſe it co-eval with that of Cadmus. The trade which Britain carried on with Phœnicia, perhaps as far back as that period *, makes it probable that our Druids, inſtead of taking their

* Sammes Brit. p. 47. Herodot. l. 3. c. 15.

alphabet even from that of Cadmus, had drawn it from the ſame fountain ‡.

WHETHER

‡ The learned by Dr Johnſon ſuppoſes the Caledonians to have been always a rude and illiterate people, who had never any written language. But this aſſertion is manifeſtly without foundation; for we can ſtill produce a number of old MSS. in the Galic language. When the Druids, who ſpoke this tongue, and were by no means unlearned, had been driven from the reſt of Britain, thoſe of Caledonia took up their reſidence in Iona, one of the Hebrides, where they had a college, and lived and taught unmoleſted, till they were diſpoſſeſſed by St Columba in the ſixth century. For ſeveral ages after that period, Iona was one of the moſt famous ſeats of learning which this or any of the neighbouring kingdoms could boaſt of; and the language in which almoſt all this learning was retailed, and written, was the Galic. The difference between this and the Iriſh, which the Doctor and ſome others lay ſo much ſtreſs upon, is of no very ancient date. The language of Columba, who had his education in the Iriſh ſchools, appears, from what remains of his compoſition, to have been pure Galic; and the elegy of his bard over the famous Iriſh champion Murcha Macbrian, of an older date, is no leſs ſo. From this identity of the language during ſo many ages, and from the conſtant intercourſe between the two countries, it may be inferred, that any cultivation which the language received was common to both kingdoms.

To theſe obſervations I add a few facts to prove that we had for a long time back a written language. In the iſland of Mull, in the neighbourhood of Iona, there has been from time immemorial, till of very late, a ſucceſſion of *Ollas*, or "graduate doctors," in a family of the name of M'Lean, whoſe writings, to the amount of a large cheſtful, were all wrote in Galic. What remained of this treaſure was, not many years ago, bought up as a literary curioſity at the deſire of the duke of Chandos, and is ſaid to have periſhed in the wreck of that nobleman's fortune. Lord Kaims (Sketches, B. 1.) mentions a Galic MS. of the firſt four books of Fingal, which the tranſlator of Oſſian found in the iſle of Sky, of as old a date as the year 1403. Juſt now I have in my poſſeſſion a mutilated treatiſe of phyſic, and another of anatomy, with part of a calendar, belonging probably to ſome ancient monaſtery, all in this language and character. Theſe pieces, when compared with others of a later date, appear to be ſeveral centuries old. I had the uſe of another equally ancient from captain M'Lauchlan of the 55th regiment. It conſiſted of ſome poems and a theological diſcourſe. From theſe obſervations and facts, it clearly appears, that ever ſince the time of the Druids, the Galic has been always a written language.

If this note had not already ſwelled ſo much, we might offer ſeveral arguments to ſhew, that, in all probability, the Galic

WHETHER the Druids were acquainted with the Greek language, is a queſtion which ſome have affirmed, and others denied. Thoſe of Gaul might know little of it till the Maſſilian colony had introduced it to the country, and taught the better ſort to write their bargains and contracts in it †. Had it been much in vogue in the times of Cæſar, he had not needed an interpreter to converſe with Divitiacus; nor would he, for the ſake of ſecrecy, write his letter in that language to Cicero ‡. As the Druids of Britain, however, were more learned, and as the nation were in commerce with the Greeks long before the time of Cæſar, they might be under a neceſſity of forming ſome acquaintance with their language, and might uſe it in their accounts and contracts, though they held their religion and laws too ſacred to be truſted to it §. From what is related of the philoſopher Abaris, who ſeems to have been a Britiſh if not a Hebridian Druid *, we may infer that at leaſt ſome of the order had turned their attention pretty early to the ſtudy of the Greek language. From the account left us of this perſon by the orator Himerius, he ſeems to have ſpoken it with the greateſt eaſe and elegance; as it was neceſſary he ſhould, ſince he appears to have been an embaſſador on ſome buſineſs of importance. "From his ſpeech one would have thought Abaris had come out of the

lic alphabet as well as language is the ſame that was uſed by the ancient Celts; and therefore the moſt likely to have been the parent of the Gothic or Saxon letter, which bears a ſtrong reſemblance to it: only the latter has adopted the full complement of the Roman alphabet, while the Galic is ſtill ſatisfied with almoſt only the orginal Phœnician letters.

† Strab. l. 4. ‡ Cæſ. l. 1. 19. c. & 5. 12.

§ Cæſ. 6. 1. f.

* Hecat. ap. Dio. Sicul. 3. 11.—Toland (Miſcel. p. 160. &c.) offers ſeveral arguments to prove Abaris a Druid of Bel's or Apollo's great temple in the Hebrides, abovementioned.---Perhaps his name of Abaris, or *Abarich*, might be an appellative from a country in that neighbourhood.

† Hi-

the *Academy* or very *Lycæum*. Abaris was affable in converſation; expeditious and ſecret in diſpatching affairs of importance. He was ſtudious of wiſdom, and fond of friendſhip; at the ſame time cautious and circumſpect; truſting little to fortune, as became one on whoſe prudence ſo much was relied †." In ſhort, in every qualification and virtuous accompliſhment, none could excel Abaris. Hence Pythagoras's fondneſs for him, and readineſs to initiate him into all his myſteries. The Druid (for it is plain this philoſopher was one, not only from his learning, but from the circumſtance of his dreſs reaching to his heels, whereas it came ſcarce to the knees of others) might requite the Samian with perhaps as valuable knowledge as he could receive from him ‡. For if we may judge of Abaris from the few hints recorded of him, to no philoſopher does he ſeem to have been inferior. But to return from this digreſſion, if it can be called ſuch, concerning the literature of our Druids, we make ſome more remarks on their proficiency in natural philoſophy.

FROM the obſervations formerly made on the ſize of their *Cromleachs* and obeliſks, it appears they were no ſtrangers to the mechanic powers. The ſize of their *judgment* or *rocking* ſtones makes this further manifeſt. Theſe, which they called *clacha-brath*, were ſpherical ſtones of an immenſe ſize, which were raiſed upon other flat ones, into which they inſerted a ſmall prominence, which fitted the cavity ſo exactly, and was ſo concealed by looſe ſtones lying round

† Himer. ap. Phot. in Orat. ad Urſic. Etiam Dio. Sicul. ubi ſupra, et Porphyr. in vita Pythag.

‡ Suidas (in Pythag.) ſays, that he ſtudied philoſophy under Abaris the Hyperborean.---For the country of Abaris, ſee (beſides Toland) Carte's Hiſt. Eng. vol. i. p. 52, 53.

† l. 3.

round it, that nobody could diſcern the artifice. Theſe globes were ſo balanced, that the leaſt touch imaginable could make them turn and vibrate; whereas any thing of a greater force, by preſſing their weight againſt the ſide of the cavity, rendered them abſolutely immoveable. Of this kind was the famous GIGONIAN ſtone mentioned in the abridgment of Ptolemy Hepheſtion's hiſtory †. It ſtood, he ſays, near the Ocean; the name which thoſe early writers gave to the Atlantic, in oppoſition to the Mediterranean ſea. As the particular place is not mentioned, we can only ſay it ſtood ſomewhere within the Druidical pale, and probably on the Gauliſh or Britiſh ſhore. But let this be as it will, it was manifeſtly a Druidical *rocking-ſtone*, or *clach-bhrath*; for he adds, that "it could be moved with ſo ſmall a matter as the ſtalk of aſphodel, whilſt it remained immoveable againſt the greateſt force that could be applied to it." In Britain, theſe ſtones were frequent; and ſome of them, till of very late, were to be met with. Sir R. Sibbald * deſcribes, and explains the myſtery of one of them, which was broken down by Cromwell's ſoldiers near a place called *Balvaird*, "the Bard or Druid's town." In Iona, the laſt aſylum of the Caledonian Druids, there were ſeveral of theſe *clach-bhraths*, ſome of them of marble, not many ages back. And though the ſuperſtitious regard paid to theſe ſtones, occaſioned their being defaced, and turned into the ſea; yet the vulgar, thinking it eſſential to have ſomething of the kind, have ſubſtituted other rough balls in their room, which are ſtill ſhewn among the curioſities of the place, by the ſame name of *clacha-brath*, or "judgment-ſtones ‡."

THE

† l. 3. c. 3. * Appendix to his hiſtory of Fife and Kinroſs. ‡ See Pennant's voyage---in Iona.

THE uſe which the Druids made of theſe ſtones is obvious from their name. By paſſing the nicety of the mechaniſm upon the vulgar for a miracle, they uſed them in deciding cauſes; and, like their *gabha-bheil*, or "trial by fire," managed them with ſuch art, that they ſeemed to have the miraculous ſanction of heaven to confirm their ſentence.—Some time after the introduction of Chriſtianity, theſe ſtones, from the different acceptations of the word *brath*, and from the new ideas affixed to the divinity-terms of the Druids, were ſuppoſed to refer to the *laſt judgment*. Accordingly, a ſtory was ſet on foot, and is ſtill kept up, that the world was to come to a period whenever theſe balls, by their circumvolutions, ſhould wear through the flags upon which they reſted. From this notion, they were for ſome ages well driven about, by ſuch as were "impatient for the conſummation of all things." But, in proportion as this zeal cooled, their motion began to ſtagnate; and, if we may judge from the ſtate of reſt in which they have been for ſome years back, we may conjecture that few men are now impatient for the approach of that awful period.

IN ſpeaking of the knowledge which the Druids had of the mechanic powers, we muſt not overlook that amazing monument of it, the fabric of Stonehenge. Stones of 30 or 40 tons, that muſt have been a draught for 150 oxen, carried too from the diſtance of 16 computed miles, raiſed to a vaſt height, and placed in their beds with ſuch caſe, that their mortiſes were made exactly to tally;—all this was a labour of ſuch arduouſneſs and difficulty, that modern philoſophers, with all their boaſted improvements in ſcience and art, muſt behold it with wonder. No other evidence is neceſſary to ſhew how well the Druids, who have certainly an in-

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dubitable right to this edifice, underſtood both the theory and the practice of mechanical philoſophy *.

AMONG the *arcana* of nature which our Druids were acquainted with, there are many preſumptive, if not poſitive, proofs, for placing the art of gunpowder, or artificial thunder and lightning; though, like all their other myſteries, they kept the invention of it a ſecret. Some learned men allow, that the prieſts of Delphos were in poſſeſſion of this art; though, for the ſervice of their god, and the intereſt of their own order, they kept it a myſtery. The ſtorm of thunder and lightning which, in three ſeveral attempts made to rob their temple, kindled in the face of the invaders as they approached it, and drove back, with loſs and terror, both Xerxes and Brennus, cannot be imagined any other than this †. Providence cannot be ſuppoſed to have taken ſuch concern in the preſervation of that idolatrous edifice, as to work a ſeries of miracles ſo very ſeaſonably in its favours. Whoever reads the accounts which we have of the celebration of the myſteries of Ceres, will plainly ſee, that it was this ſecret which conſtituted the moſt wonderful part of them. "The probationers who were to be initiated, were led into a part of the temple that was full of darkneſs and horror. Then, all on a ſudden, a ſtrong light darted in upon them. This quickly diſappeared, and was followed with a terrible noiſe like thunder. Fire again fell down like lightning; which, by its continual flaſhes, ſtruck terror into the trembling ſpectators ‡."—The cauſe of this artificial lightning and thunder is plain. And if the prieſts of Delphos, or the

* Stukeley's Stonehenge. Anc. Hiſt. ---*Of the Gauls*, &c. † Temple's Miſcel. on anc. and mod. learning; with Herod. & Diod. Sicul. &c. ‡ Diod. Sicul. & Plut. in Anc. Hiſt. *Athen.*

lazy monks of later times, could find out ſuch an art, which the old Chineſe philoſophers are likewiſe ſaid to have been acquainted with, and which ſeems to have made a part in the myſtery of the Egyptian Iſis, why may we not ſuppoſe, that thoſe great ſearchers into nature, the Druids, might alſo light upon the ſecret? The impreſſions of dread which thunder and lightning are ſo apt to make upon the mind, would certainly induce the Druids to try, if poſſible, to counterfeit theſe awful phenomena; as the invention of any thing like them would be a moſt uſeful engine to keep the wondering world in awe of them. And if we conſider the deep and long reſearches of theſe colleges of philoſophers, their being poſſeſſed of the experiments of a ſeries of ages before, and an extenſive communication with other countries, we can hardly ſuppoſe the myſtery of the nitrous grain could eſcape them. Nature is ſeldom ſo ſhy as to hide herſelf from thoſe who court her ſo ſtudiouſly as did the Druids.

THESE preſumptions premiſed, then, we may obſerve in Lucan's ſatirical deſcription * of the Druidical grove near Marſeilles, a plain evidence of this invention. "There is a report (ſays he) that the grove is often ſhaken, and ſtrangely moved, and that dreadful ſounds are heard from its caverns; and that it is ſometimes in a blaze, without being conſumed." In the poem of *Dargo the ſon of the Druid of Bel*, phenomena of a ſomewhat ſimilar nature are mentioned. No ordinary meteor would have been ſo much noticed by the poet, nor ſo much dreaded by the people. But what gives ſtill more ſtrength to this argument, is a remark that may be made on ſome expreſſions in the language of the order we ſpeak of. The

* Pharſal. l. 3.

The Galic word for lightning is *De'lan*, or *De'lanach;* that is, literally, " the flaſh or flame of a God:" and the name for any leſſer flaſh, that is quick and ſudden as lightning, is *Drui'lan*, or *Drui'lanach*, which means, " the flaſh or flame of the Druids." Thus, for inſtance, the quick flaſh that bolts from red-hot iron, when ſtruck on the anvil juſt after coming out of the forge, is called *Drui'lanach*. And, in a well-known fragment of Oſſian *, in which he ſpeaks of ſome arms that were fabricated by Luno, the Scandinavian Vulcan, the ſword of Oſcar is diſtinguiſhed by this epithet, and compared to the *flame of the Druids;* which ſhews, that there was ſuch a phenomenon, and that it was abundantly terrible.— With the myſtery theſe philoſophers ſeem plainly to have been acquainted; but their intereſt, and perhaps their mercy, led them to keep the terrible art ſtill a ſecret.

MANY other obſervations might be derived from the Galic language, which might give us ſome more hints of the knowledge of the Druids, if they had not already led us away ſo far. In ſhort, every thing within the circle of *Drui 'eachd*, or " magic," or, to ſpeak more properly, within the compaſs of natural experimental philoſophy, was the ſtudy of the Druids; and the honour of every wonder that lay within that verge was always allowed them. Nothing was ſuppoſed to be above their reach, except the few greater and more awful phenomena of nature. Theſe only were aſcribed to the Supreme Being, and allowed to have been the immediate operation of his hand. This much is implied in the Celtic name for miracle; which is *mior-Bheil*, or *menr-Bhe'il*, " the finger of Be'il †."

* Called *an Gabha'*, or *The ſmith*. The words are,

'S gum bi 'n *Drui'lanach* lann Oſcair,
'S gum bi Choſgarach lann Chaoilte.

† The French *merveille*, and the Engliſh *marvel*, ſeem to be from the ſame root.

Thus the Druids and their Be'il divided the wonders of the world between them. If thoſe which fell to the ſhare of the prieſts were not the moſt awful, they were at leaſt the moſt numerous.

CHAP. V.

Of the MEDICAL *Profeſſion of the* DRUIDS.

A FEW remarks upon the Druids, conſidered in the light of phyſicians †, ſhall bring us to conclude our account of them.

FROM the temperance and exerciſe of men in early times, the conſtitution would be rarely broke, and the health but ſeldom impaired. To all the diſeaſes which ſpring from idleneſs and luxury, the two fruitful ſources of malady, they would be entire ſtrangers. The wounds received in war, or the falls and bruiſes which were incidental to hunting, were probably the moſt common complaints; and the virtues of a few ſimples and unguents, to which the Druids could be no ſtrangers, afforded an eaſy and effectual cure for them. During the experiments of many ages, they could not fail to arrive at a proper knowledge of theſe things, although they ſhould have no more learning or invention than what neceſſity does generally inſpire. The Highlanders, having ſeldom acceſs to the help of the phyſician or ſurgeon, ſtill perform very ſurpriſing and ſpeedy cures by their knowledge of the herbs of the mountain. Theſe they ſtill gather "by the ſide of their ſecret ſtream;"

† Plin. l. 24, &c.

ſtream;" and by their ſucceſs afford a demonſtration, that a kind Providence hath furniſhed every country with medicines for all thoſe diſeaſes which are natural to it; tho' not always for thoſe which are imported by luxury, and nouriſhed by idleneſs.

THE ſovereign remedy of the Druids, or the *all-heal (uil'ice)* which made, at leaſt, a principal ingredient in every cure, was the *miſſoldine of the oak*, or *the miſleto* *. The uncommon regard which they paid to this, ſeems not to have been owing ſo much to any intrinſic virtue in itſelf, as to teach men to place their chief dependance for health upon the Deity; from whoſe temple or conſecrated grove, this ſimple, which gave their efficacy to all the reſt, was taken. It was to inculcate the ſame ſovereign regard to GOD that they "ſo-"lemnly prayed to him to give a bleſſing to his own gift †;" as if they would have men always remember, that no medicine could be effectual, nor any phyſician ſucceſsful, without the help of GOD. A notion, though now grown obſolete, highly worthy of imitation.

WITH regard to thoſe trifling ceremonies which the Druids are ſaid to have uſed in pulling and preparing their herbs and ſimples, they ſeem to have been recorded more with a view to expoſe the order, than to inform poſterity. It was their maxim, indeed, to keep every thing in a miſt; but this was hardly ſo neceſſary here, as nobody would expect a cure till the Druid had firſt implored upon the means the benediction of heaven. It is not, however, improbable, but that, after the decline of their power, when the Roman writers were acquainted with them, they might, in order to make a myſtery of a trade which they were

their

* Plin. 24. 44. † Ibid.

then forced to practiſe for a livelihood, uſe ſome poor ſhifts and ceremonies, which in their proſperity they would have ſcorned to ſtoop to. Some charms ſtill practiſed by the vulgar on theſe occaſions, afford a preſumption that the Druids ſometimes uſed them.

FOR lingering diſeaſes, inward complaints, and mental diſorders, the Druids ſeem to have chiefly recommended, or at leaſt to have preſcribed in conjunction with other means, a change of air, exerciſe, the cold bath, and drinking of wells of ſome particular quality. For this end, they fixed, in places of conſiderable height and diſtance, upon ſome well, the waters of which were to be drunk or bathed in, according as the caſe of the patient or the quality of the ſpring required. To this, in the milder ſeaſons of the year, they were to make three ſeveral tours, and to perform ſeveral ceremonies with a religious exactneſs; but with which religion had manifeſtly no other concern, than as a decoy to make them go through the ſervice. Or rather, by teaching them to conſider the matter in a religious light, and by directing their eyes to heaven for a remedy, their hopes and expectations were greatly raiſed: which would go a great way towards effecting their cure; and which, by increaſing their devotion, and laying them under additional obligations to a good behaviour, would conduce much to make them better members of ſociety. Some of thoſe Druidical waters retain to this day their credit. That of Strathfillan, in particular, is ſtill famous. It is ſituated near what is ſuppoſed to be the higheſt ground in Scotland; and as it can have but few inhabitants near it, the moſt of the patients muſt be from a diſtance; ſo that they have not only the pureſt air, but likewiſe abundance of exerciſe.

exercise. From the remotest corners of Argyleshire and other places they flock thither in crowds, in the beginning of summer and of harvest, as to a *panacea* for every disorder. Three several journeys are necessary; and if the patient should happen to die before he has accomplished them, one of his nearest surviving friends is bound in conscience to complete the unfinished pilgrimage. This is believed equally essential to procure a *requiem* both for the manes of his friend, and for his own. Hence it is no uncommon thing to see a sturdy fellow travel an hundred miles to fulfil the ceremony. . If this trouble was not to be incurred by the patient's friends, they might not possibly be at so much pains to give him their assistance to use the means of obtaining a cure in his own person. The chief ceremonies performed after reaching the water, are, bathing thrice, and going thrice round some carns at a moderate distance, performing always the circumvolutions *deis'iul*, or in the same direction with the course of the sun. These and some other rites manifestly shew the custom to be of Druidical origin. If *Fillan* was the tutelar saint of the place in later times, and not a Druid, he might possibly find his interest in countenancing the practice, and giving it the sanction of his name. Indeed, if any superstitious practice could be said to deserve a toleration, it was this; which, though disguised under that mysterious veil, has nevertheless a foundation in good sense, and has often proved sanative. For, what with the change of air, which is there in the greatest purity; the exercise; the season of the year; the bath, impregnated too with a mineral; and, above all, the strong faith of obtaining a cure—the effect is surprising upon the multitude; insomuch that generally

rally two in three of them return home, if not well, at leaſt much better than if they had returned from the hands of ſome of the Faculty.

BUT the chief care of the Druids ſeems to have been to prevent, rather than to cure diſeaſes. For this end, they delivered ſome general preſcriptions for the preſervation of health, in ſhort maxims or adages, which it would be no burden to the memory to retain. One of theſe, and perhaps the beſt that could be delivered, recommends in three words, as the chief recipe for health, *cheerfulneſs*, *temperance*, and *exerciſe* or *early riſing* §.

FROM theſe few hints we may obſerve, that the Druids acted in their medical, with the ſame conſummate wiſdom and policy as they did in every other capacity. They firſt deviſed the means which were moſt likely to operate; and for the ſurer performance of theſe means, they called in religion, or, if you will, the powerful engine of ſuperſtition, to their aid.

THUS have we conſidered the order of the Druids, the nature of their inſtitution, and the variety of their offices, as diſtinctly as the materials afforded us by ancient hiſtorians, and by the remains of their own language, would allow. The inſtitution ſeems to have been founded on the moſt extenſive plan, and with the deepeſt policy. It appears to have been their great aim to make a monopoly of all authority, and to engroſs in their own hands almoſt every atom both of civil and religious power. To compaſs this end, no engine which human wit could deviſe had been left untried; and no pains had been ſpared, which human ſtrength could execute. It is

§ Bi gu ſugach, geanmnaidh, mocheir'each.

is therefore no wonder if their endeavours grew to be ſo ſucceſsful, and their power ſo enormous. No order ever acquired ſo high an aſcendant over the human mind; much leſs did any extend their influence ſo far, or preſerve it for ſo long a period. From this vaſt ſway of theirs, we might judge, although we had not ſuch proofs of it, that by no ſuperficial merit could they have attained to it. Mankind, in the moſt civilized and enlightened ſtate, may, for a little, be impoſed upon with a fair appearance, and with plauſible pretenſions; but, even in the moſt barbarous æra, they cannot always be deceived with mere ſhew inſtead of reality. That muſt be ſolid merit which can maintain its credit long. Accordingly, we have ſeen that the Druids were, by their conduct and character, as much entitled to love and eſteem, as they were, by their power, to obedience and reſpect. The moſt part of life muſt have been ſpent in probation, and one unremitting ſeries of good and great actions muſt have been ſtrewed over every part of it, before any one could be admitted a member of this ſociety. Habits ſo well confirmed, could not be eaſily ſhaken off. In the almoſt evening of life, they would not readily decline from that path to which they had been ſo long accuſtomed; eſpecially as they had ſtill before them ſome object of ambition to engage their perſeverance, and to keep alive their attention to character.

As the order had thus acquired their power by real merit, we find it was by the ſame title they maintained it. Accuſtomed to an auſtere, ſtudious, and aſcetic life, and uſing their power only for the good government of ſociety, without having any ſeparate intereſts of their own to promote, nobody grudged them their authority. The yoke, it is true, might gall at times; but it was as ſel-

dom as poſſible, and ſtill men found it their intereſt to bear it. To have been able to govern and keep in awe ſo many fierce and warlike tribes, for ſuch a courſe of ages, affords a manifeſt proof of the uncommon wiſdom and addreſs of the Druids. This addreſs, however, nobody will pretend, on all occaſions, to juſtify. But the times in which they lived were thoſe of prieſtcraft and ſuperſtition. To give theſe things the beſt direction they were capable of, is all that could be expected of the perſons under conſideration. And this much they ſeem to have done, from their ſucceſs in maintaining ſo well the order and peace of ſociety.

THERE is, however, one thing in the conduct of the Druids which we muſt both blame and regret. They made a myſtery of every thing, and kept all their diſcoveries wrapt up in miſts and darkneſs. This, conſidering the number, and the great application of theſe philoſophers, muſt have been an unſpeakable loſs, not only to their contemporaries, but to ſucceeding generations. Yet, even this myſterious conduct was probably neceſſary to ſupport the veneration and authority of their order; which, as matters then ſtood, was eſſential to the good government of their people. Men were not yet ripe for a plain form of laws, to be obeyed merely for their own ſake; nor had naked truth and abſtracted virtue charms ſufficient to allure them, without being dreſſed in that ſuperſtitious garb with which the uncivilized mind is ſo apt to be pleaſed. Their jealouſy of any thing that might derogate from their reſpect, ſeems, however, to have exceeded all bounds, when it kept them from truſting any part of their knowledge to writing. For this crime, they ſeem to be juſtly puniſhed in their character and fame with poſterity. Their conduct herein has not only deprived them of the

the vaſt honour which their great wiſdom and learning, if recorded, ſeemed to promiſe them; but alſo given room to their enemies to allege of them whatever they pleaſed, without any danger of being contradicted. If the Druids envied the world that vaſt treaſure of knowledge, which took them ſo many ages to amaſs together; the world, to be revenged for the injury, has never ſtept out of its way to ſearch for ſo many of the ſcattered fragments as might give a tolerable notion of their authors. Rather than be at this trouble, it takes their character on the word of their profeſſed enemies, who, unhappily for the Druids, have been their only hiſtoriographers.

FROM the amazing growth of the Druidical ſyſtem, whoſe roots extended ſo deep and ſo far, it is ſurpriſing how any ſtorm could overturn it, were it not that the ſeeds of decay are interwoven with all the affairs of men, which, like themſelves, cannot poſſibly ſurvive a certain period. From almoſt the days of Noah, to thoſe of J. Cæſar, had Druidiſm ſubſiſted in Gaul and Britain. And, even in that advanced age, ſuch was its ſtrength, that it almoſt defied the Roman power to conquer it. All the legions brought againſt it, only wounded without killing it. The ſevereſt edicts behoved to follow them *; and the ſtill keener, though ſmoother, weapon, the erection of ſchools and academies †. At laſt, worn out with age and ſufferings, this formidable phantom was forced to take ſhelter in the retired iſles of Angleſey and Iona; where, though weak and effete with years, it lived till the goſpel, that glorious *day-ſpring from on high, viſited the multitude of the Gentile iſles*, and

* Sueton. in vit. Claud. Plin. l. 30. c. 1. † Tac. Annal. 3. 43.

baniſhed with its light this ſpectre of darkneſs. To pave the way for this, ſeems to have been the great end which Providence had to ſerve in theſe countries by the Roman conqueſts, although it was in their heart only *to deſtroy and cut off nations not a few*. And it is remarkable, that when the Caledonian mountains oppoſed the Roman arms with their inſurmountable barrier, a civil diſſenſion was made to anſwer their end where they could not penetrate. The Druids, by an unſeaſonable and overſtrained exertion of their declining power, excited the people to ſhake off a yoke which preſſed the ſorer upon them, when it ſhould have been rather ſlackened *. In this effort for liberty they happily ſucceeded, and became diſpoſed to embrace the firſt dawnings of a new and better religion.

* Trathal, grandfather to the celebrated Fingal, having been choſen Vergobretus or Generaliſſimo of the Caledonian army in a war with the Romans, was not diſpoſed at his return to reſign his office at the requeſt of the Druids, who would ſtill keep up the honour of their order by peremptorily inſiſting upon a compliance. Upon this a civil war commenced, in which the Druids and their abettors were overthrown, and made to ſuffer from their countrymen the ſame fate which the order had every where elſe ſuffered from the Romans. What facilitated this overthrow was, that few of the principal families had been then members, or even diſciples. Their continual wars with the Romans had, for ſome time back, taken up their whole attention. The Druids afterwards got ſome aid from Scandinavia; but after a few unſucceſsful efforts, they were forced at length to retire to Iona, where they were not quite extinct till the coming of St Columba, in the ſixth century.---But though the order of the Druids was by that time extinct, their ſuperſtitions and ceremonies for a long time after remained. The undue and ſuperſtitious regard which continued to be paid to the ſun and moon, and to the groves, lakes, and rivers, which had been the appendages of their worſhip, occaſioned many edicts againſt theſe things in Gaul, during the middle centuries. In England, we meet with one to the ſame purpoſe by *Canute* in the eleventh century; and, if it was not to avoid prolixity, many obſervations might be added to thoſe already made, to ſhew how many of the Druidical rites maintained a footing in North Britain to an æra much later.

gion. For this exchange we can never be ſufficiently thankful. Druidiſm may have been the pureſt of all Pagan ſuperſtitions, and perhaps the very wiſeſt of all inſtitutions that were merely human. But our religion is divine. Conſidered in this view, the ſubject which we have been treating of is not altogether unimportant. Nor is it altogether unintereſting in any light in which we view it. The imperfect account which it gives, of the philoſophy, religion, and government, of a conſiderable part of the globe, during ſo great a portion of time, can be a matter of indifference only to thoſe who are nothing intereſted in the hiſtory of mankind. And ſuch perſons are not men: they are ſomething more; or, as probably, ſomething leſs.

A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

AUTHENTICITY

OF

OSSIAN's POEMS.

FROM one who offers to the public a few more remains of ancient Galic Poetry, ſomething may, perhaps, be expected on a queſtion which has been a good deal agitated of late years: Whether or not the works of Oſſian are genuine? To all men of judgment, taſte, and candour, who have peruſed, with attention, either theſe poems themſelves, or the able and elegant defence of their authenticity by Dr Blair, this may juſtly appear a ſuperfluous labour. Some regard, however, is due even to the cavils of ſceptics, leſt they ſhould miſconſtrue our ſilence, and imagine, when their objections are not anſwered, that the point is yielded: and a ſtill greater regard is due to the injured memory of the venerable Celtic bard, who can no longer anſwer for himſelf, or vindicate his own cauſe.

ON theſe accounts, I preſume to advance, in ſupport of Oſſian, a few

few remarks, which my local ſituation, more than any other capacity, may enable me to offer. The method in which this is propoſed to be done, is, firſt, to mention ſome of the *internal*, and then of the *external evidences* for the authenticity of theſe poems; and afterwards to *anſwer* the chief *objections* which have been made to their being genuine.—In the proſecution of this argument, we ſhall have ſuch frequent occaſion to turn over our eyes on the ancient cuſtoms and manners of that people to whom theſe poems relate, as ſhall in a great meaſure relieve us from that tedioufneſs and languor which often attend ſubjects of debate and controverſy.

I. With regard to the firſt, and even the ſecond head propoſed, we need do little more than refer to that eminent critic, by whom theſe points have been already ſo well diſcuſſed; while we are haſtening forward to what we have principally in view, the anſwer of objections which it did not lie in his way to combat, before they had been ſtarted.

These compoſitions then, as he obſerves *, have all the characters of antiquity ſo deeply impreſſed upon them, that no reader of taſte and judgment can deny their claim to it. They exhibit ſo lively a picture of cuſtoms which have diſappeared for ages, as could only be drawn from nature and real life. The features are every where ſo ſtrongly marked, that few portraits of the life continually paſſing before us are found to be drawn with ſo much likeneſs; and the train of ideas are every where ſo much out of the common line of modern compoſition, that nothing but the real circumſtances which they deſcribe could poſſibly have ſuggeſted them.

The

* See Dr Blair's Diſſertation on the Poems of Oſſian.

THE manners uniformly relate to a very early ſtage of ſociety. Hunting was ſtill the chief occupation; and paſturage was only beginning to be attended to. To any period more advanced than this, there is no hint, no alluſion throughout the poems. No traces of agriculture or commerce, no mention of cities, very little of arts, except ſuch as were abſolutely neceſſary, and ſtill leſs of ſciences, are there to be met with. The circle of ideas, as correſponds with an early æra, is very circumſcribed.

THAT diſtinction of ranks which ariſes from the eſtabliſhment of property and advancement of ſociety is in theſe poems nowhere to be found. The firſt heroes prepare their own repaſts, and, indiſcriminately, condeſcend to the moſt menial offices. Valour in the men, and beauty in the women, hold generally the firſt rank of praiſe; and the virtues of the mind, though by no means overlooked, are often mentioned but as ſecondary qualifications. Leſſer contentions ariſe from cauſes frequently ſlight, but always natural. A rivalſhip in love, an omiſſion at a feaſt, or an affront at a tournament, prove, not ſeldom, the foundation of a deadly quarrel between ſingle heroes. And the wars between whole tribes are carried on, not to enlarge their territory; but to revenge, perhaps, the killing of a few deer on their mountains; the carrying off a few arms, the chief furniture of their halls; or the taking forcibly away one of their women. And as their occupation was hunting and war, ſo the chief object of their ambition and purſuit was to obtain, on theſe accounts, an immortality of fame in the ſong of the bard. This obtained, they thought themſelves ſecure of that immortality of happineſs, which they looked for in their lowly paradiſe.

The notions of a future ſtate which theſe poems exhibit, are no leſs ſtrongly marked with the characters of antiquity, than the picture which they give of manners. This creed is throughout ſupported; admirably ſuited to the times; but, like the manners, extremely ſimple. Were the poems of Oſſian not genuine, and that we could think a modern imagination could graſp ſo ſtrong an idea of manners and notions ſo remote; why, it may be aſked, ſhould the poet fix, without any neceſſity, upon an æra ſo barren of ideas and tranſactions, when, in a period by many centuries later, he might have a much wider circle to play in?

The language too, and the ſtructure, of theſe poems, like every other thing about them, bear the moſt ſtriking characters of antiquity. The language is bold, animated, and metaphorical; ſuch as it is found to be in all infant ſtates; where the words, as well as the ideas and objects, muſt be few; and where the language, like the imagination, is ſtrong and undiſciplined *. No abſtract, and few general terms occur in the poems of Oſſian. If objects are but introduced in a ſimile, they are generally particularized. It is "the young pine of Iniſhuna;" it is "the bow of the ſhowery Lena." This is a ſtriking feature in the language of all early ſtates, whoſe objects and ideas are few and particular, and whoſe ordinary converſation

* In the Galic, being an original language, moſt of the words are to this day energetical, and expreſs ſome property or quality of their object; while it has a further advantage in having few or no words derived from any other language. By this means, to one who underſtands both equally well, it conveys a clearer and more forcible idea than the Engliſh, which is, for the moſt part, either arbitrary, or derived from other tongues. To which we may add, that the Galic, having no words to expreſs all the acceſſion of ideas and arts which attend the advancement of modern ſcience, is ſtill obliged to have frequent recourſe to metaphor and circumlocution; a circumſtance which gives it a poetical air and emphaſis which no modern language can be poſſeſſed of.

* For

verſation is, of courſe, figurative and poetical; adorned with ſuch tropes of rhetoric as a modern would ſcarce venture to uſe in the boldeſt flights of poetry. This character, therefore, ſo conſpicuous in the poems of Oſſian, could be impreſſed ſo deeply on them, only by one who ſaw, and felt, and bore a part in the ſcenes he is deſcribing. A poet in his cloſet could no more compoſe like Oſſian, than he could act like him in the field, or on the mountain.

The compoſition alſo, though it is, like the language, bold, nervous, and conciſe, is yet plain and artleſs; without any thing of that modern refinement, or elaborate decoration, which waits on the advancement of literature. No foreign ornaments are hunted after. The poet is always content with thoſe which his ſubject naturally ſuggeſts, or which lie within his view. Further than that tract of heaven, earth, air, and ſea, which lay, I may ſay, within his ſtudy, he rarely makes any excurſion. Whatever ſuited his purpoſe within this circle, ſeldom eſcaped his notice; but his imagination, though quick and rapid, ſeldom choſe to travel abroad for any materials which might be had at home. The wild and grand nature with which he was familiar, and his own vaſt genius, were the only reſources to which he cared to be indebted for his ornaments. By this means his compoſitions are marked with a ſignature which they could never receive from the lamp or from the cloſet: a ſignature which he alone could impreſs, who ſaw before him, in that apartment in which he muſed, thoſe objects which he deſcribes; who bore a part in thoſe expeditions which he celebrates; and who fought in thoſe battles which he ſings *.

* For further ſatisfaction on this head, we beg leave to refer the reader to the learned and ingenious lord Kaims, who in his Sketches of Man produces many direct and collateral proofs for the authenticity of Oſſian's poems.

BEFORE we quit this part of the argument, I would obſerve, that all the internal characters mentioned, appear far more ſtriking in all that ever I heard of the Galic, than they do in the Engliſh tranſlation. In the 7th book of Temora, which becauſe it is beſt known I inſtance, the language, as well as the ideas, the kind of verſe, the whole texture of the compoſition, the every thing about it, wears ſuch an air of antiquity, and has ſo venerable, ſo grand, and ſo uncommon a caſt, that the firſt critics in the language ſcruple not to affirm that a modern could no more compoſe it, than he could by charms bring down the moon from heaven. To imitate with ſucceſs the manner of Oſſian will, I imagine, be found difficult; but to counterfeit his ſtyle, his verſe, and very language, infinitely more ſo. Within theſe thirty years, one or two profeſſed Galic poets have attempted it*. But they had only gone through a few ſtanzas, when they diſcovered, what every competent judge had diſcovered before they had gone through ſo many lines, how unable they were to ſupport the character which they perſonated. They immediately threw aſide the maſk which ſo ill fitted them, and never afterwards reſumed it.—That perſons who had thus a genius for Galic poetry, who had long profeſſed and long practiſed it, and who from their infancy had been intimate with the pattern which they endeavoured to copy, ſhould fail even in a ſhort ſonnet, while one who had not in theſe reſpects half their advantages, was able to go through whole books without failing in one inſtance, were indeed a wonder; and to believe it is any thing but ſcepticiſm. But it is time we ſhould proceed,

II. To

* One in Glendovan, Argyleſhire; the other in Glenlochy, Perthſhire.

II. To the external, and more poſitive proof of the authenticity of Oſſian.

THAT there have been in the Highlands of Scotland, for ſome ages back, a vaſt many poems that were aſcribed to Oſſian, and repeated by almoſt all perſons and on all occaſions, is a fact ſo indiſputable, that nobody can be hardy enough to deny it. There is not an old man in the Highlands, but will declare that he heard ſuch poems repeated by his father and grandfather, as pieces of the moſt remote antiquity, long before the tranſlation of them had ever been thought of*.—There is not a diſtrict in the Highlands but what has many places, waters, iſles, caves and mountains, which are called, from time immemorial, after the names of Oſſian's heroes †.—There is not a lover of ancient tale or poetry, however illiterate, but is quite intimate with almoſt every ſingle name, character, or incident in Oſſian's poems ‡.—Bards, who are themſelves ſeveral centuries old, quote them, imitate them, and allude to them §.—The ordinary converſations and compariſons of the

* Long before Mr Macpherſon appeared, Mr Stone ſchoolmaſter at Dunkeld conceived the idea of tranſlating Oſſian's poems, and publiſhed ſome ſpecimens in the Scots magazine of that time; but his early death prevented the execution of his deſign. After him Mr Pope, miniſter of Rea, began to collect them with the ſame view; but did not go through with his plan.

† Theſe names are ſo common, that where I now ſit, not far from Inverary in Argyleſhire, I could enumerate a long liſt in one view, ſuch as *Cruach-Fhinn*, "the hill of Fingal;" *Innis-Chonnain*, *Innis-Aildhe'*, *Innis-Racini'*, *Innis-Chonnail*, *&c.* the iſles of Connan, Aldo, Ryno, and Connal. Nothing is more frequent in all parts of the Highlands than names and monuments of Oſſian's heroes.

‡ Thoſe who have read the tranſlation with moſt care, have not ſo lively nor ſo juſt an idea of its hiſtory and characters, as theſe plebeians have; owing to their early intimacy with the ſongs and tales of the original, and the frequent reference to them (as we ſhall ſee below) in their proverbs and converſation.

§ Of this the tranſlator gives many inſtances in his notes;—of Roſcrana, Cul-allin

the Highlanders frequently refer to the cuſtoms and characters mentioned in them ¶; and many of their moſt common proverbs are lines borrowed from Oſſian *. To which we may add, that there are ſtill to be found a few MSS. where ſeveral of theſe poems have

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allin, Sul-mala, with an imitation by Kenneth MacAlpin's bard, and ſome other ancient poets;—all in *Temora*. To theſe many more might be added. Every body, who has liſtened to old Galic ſongs, has often heard the generous compared, in Oſſian's words, to *Fionn nam ſleadh*, and *Mac Cu'il nach d'eur neach*, "Fingal, from whom none ever went ſad;" (*Fing.* B. 6.)-- the hoſpitable, to *Cathmor, ceannuighe na dai'*, and *Ri' Atha na feile;* and the deſolate, to *Oſſian an deigh nam Fiann.* I ſhall only mention two other alluſions of this kind, which, as they are found in a printed collection, will be leſs liable to be controverted than others quoted from oral tradition. There, one poet, not very modern, ſpeaks of Oſſian's poems as the conſtant entertainment of his time in the winter-nights; and another, avowedly ancient, imitates the manner of Oſſian, makes particular mention of him and Daol, another ancient bard, and wiſhes for admittance to the ſame airy hall with both. See M'Donald's Songs, p. 5. & 33.

¶ *Cothrom na Feine*, "the equal combat," or "combat of heroes," ſo often mentioned by Oſſian, is ſo frequently referred to, that if only two boys wreſtle, nothing is more common than for their companions to order fair play by crying, *Cothrom na Feine dhoibh*, "let them have the equal combat of Fingal's heroes." A ſtrong man is often called a *Cuchullin*, "co laidir ri Cuchullin;" a man of an unjuſt imperious temper, and brutal force, a *Gara mac Stairn*, "A Swaran, ſon of Starno;" and a contentious perſon, from the peeviſh ill-natured Connan, is called *Connan-duine.*

* "Fingal, who never injured a foe," and "Fingal delights not in battle, tho' his arm be ſtrong," are favourite expreſſions of Oſſian, and the original (*Cha tug Fionn riabh blar gun chumha*---"Battle of Lora") is among the Highlanders a favourite proverb to recommend, eſpecially to the mighty, a peaceable and merciful diſpoſition.---Another is that excellent advice of Fingal to Oſcar, "Never ſearch for the battle, nor ſhun it when it comes;" *Na ſeachinn an iorguill, 'ſna h iarr i.*

FING. B 3.

Cha do dhiobair riabh Fionn
Fear a laimhe deiſe,

recommends the example of "Fingal, who never forſook his friend."

Cha bhuadhaich gu brath am meat;---"They beſt ſucceed who dare." *Fing.* B. 3.---To avoid being tedious, I ſhall mention no more of theſe common ſayings and proverbs from Oſſian, though they are certainly a moſt irrefragable argument of the authenticity and great antiquity of his poems, as alſo of the univerſal regard that has been always paid to them.

a place ‡, and ſome old men who ſtill repeat a few of them, as of old, round the flame of the winter fire §."

But are theſe the very poems, it will now be aſked, that have been tranſlated and publiſhed by Mr Macpherſon? The obſervations already made have pretty much paved the way to prove, that they are the very ſame.—The poems which this gentleman and his friends gathered from oral tradition were certainly no other than thoſe we have ſpoken of as commonly repeated in the country, and the manuſcripts he got were the ſame, only in greater perfection *. —While theſe poems were tranſlating, they were acceſſible to all the curious who could underſtand them †. They afterwards lay for

‡ Captain M'Lachlan of the 55th regiment can ſhew a few, of a letter and vellum ſo old as to be ſcarce intelligible. They are the remains of many that had been collected by his predeceſſors, the M'Lachlans of Kilbride, who were great admirers of Oſſian. A few leſs ancient manuſcripts of ſome of theſe poems are in the poſſeſſion of ſeverals.

§ Although this cuſtom is faſt vaniſhing, there are yet abundance of inſtances in all parts of the country to confirm the aſſertion. Near me juſt now, in the pariſh of Kilninver, is a tradeſman and poet of the name of M'Pheal, whom I have heard, for weeks together, repeat ancient tales and poems, many of them Oſſian's, from 5 to 10 o'clock in the winter night. In Glendovan, Kilchrenan pariſh, is a family of the name of M'Dugal; and in Arivean, Glenorchay pariſh, another of the name of M'Nicol, now almoſt extinct, both of which were ſuch *ſenachies* for ſome generations back, that they could entertain at this rate for a whole winter ſeaſon. What wonder if the poems of Oſſian, where ſuch was the cuſtom, have been ſo long preſerved!

* Mr M'Pherſon is ſaid to have got his largeſt and moſt valuable MS. of Oſſian from a Mr M'Donald in Croidart; it was known in the country by the name of the *Leabhar dearg*, or "The book with the red cover." Another he got from Macvurich, bard to Clanronald.

† It is remarkable, that they were the beſt judges to whom Mr M'Pherſon has always been readieſt to ſhow his originals. If they had not been authentic, from theſe he ſhould moſt conceal them. Not long ago, he offered, of his own accord, to ſhew them to Mr M'Laggan of the 42d, who is among the beſt judges of the Galic language and antiquities, and who had furniſhed him with ſome part of the original poems. And profeſſor M'Leod of Glaſgow, ſome years ago, was al-

for a conſiderable time in the hands of the bookſeller, for the inſpection of all who choſe to ſee them; and, as if all this had not been enough, they were offered to the public, had ſubſcribers been found to encourage the undertaking. Nothing could be more unlike an impoſture than all this. The laſt particular eſpecially, was ſuch a bold appeal to thouſands, who were capable of knowing whether theſe were the identical poems which they had been in uſe of hearing from their infancy, and which they themſelves had but a few months before given to the editor;—this, I ſay, was ſuch a bold appeal, as nothing but the conſciouſneſs of integrity and truth could poſſibly preſume upon. Beſides this, a long liſt of reſpectable perſons, gentlemen and clergymen *, who had been intimate with the original, avowed to the public, that theſe were Oſſian's poems, and that the tranſlation was literal. That all theſe ſhould proſtitute their character to ſupport a falſehood, in which they had no particular intereſt, is an idea too groſs for the conception of any body who is not himſelf utterly loſt to all ſenſe of character and name.

Amidst the general wreck to which our traditions and poems have fallen for ſome time back, many pieces of Oſſian are ſtill remaining, and are found to correſpond with the tranſlation. A Highlander may perhaps be ſuſpected of partiality in making this aſſertion; but ſeveral gentlemen of candour from other countries have made the experiment, by cauſing ſuch as had never any acceſs to ſee the tranſlation, to give the meaning of thoſe pieces which they

allowed to compare two whole books of Fingal with the original.

* See a liſt of theſe in the Appendix to Dr Blair's Critical Diſſertation on the Poems of Oſſian.

† Mr

they repeated: and they declare, that, on comparing the Galic and the Engliſh, they were entirely ſatisfied with the juſtneſs of the tranſlation †.

THOSE fragments of Oſſian, which are ſtill moſt generally known, are, as we ſhould naturally ſuppoſe, ſome of the moſt beautiful parts of his compoſition. Among them are, The battle of Lora, the epiſode of the Maid of Craca, the moſt affecting parts of Carthon, Conlath, Croma, Berrathon, the death of Oſcar in the firſt book of Temora, and almoſt the whole of Darthula. Now, if theſe and the like, are avowedly ancient, and undoubtedly the compoſition of Oſſian, it is but juſtice to allow that he could compoſe any other part of the collection, none of it being equal to ſome of theſe in poetical merit.

ANY further arguments to prove that the poems we ſpeak of are genuine tranſlations from the Galic would, I truſt, be ſuperfluous *.

† Mr Percy, in his preface to *Reliques of old Engliſh Poetry*, tells, that he himſelf had often done this, and found the interpretation, which he had got *extempore*, correſpond with the Engliſh tranſlation, with which they had no acceſs to be acquainted. Either theſe perſons were inſpired, or Oſſian's poems are authentic.

* There is, however, one other argument that has too much weight to be paſſed over. It is an aſtoniſhing correſpondence between ſome of theſe poems, and ſcenes which they are found to deſcribe; but which were too diſtant and too obſcure for the tranſlator ever to ſee or hear of, and concerning which there is not even a tradition, ſo far as ever I could learn; ſo that Mr M'Pherſon muſt have found them in MS. otherwiſe they had never appeared. I mention one inſtance, choſen purpoſely from the part leaſt known in Galic of the whole collection. It is one of the ſongs of Selma. The names of Daura and Erath there ſpoken of are ſo uncommon, that I am confident we may defy any body to produce any inſtance of their being heard in name, ſurname, or tradition. Yet in an obſcure, and almoſt inacceſſible part of Argyleſhire, which it is certain the tranſlator of Oſſian never ſaw, and which from his own ſilence, the ſilence of tradition upon that ſtory, and the diſtance and obſcurity of the place, it is equally certain he never heard of,---in this

This being allowed, then, as it well may, it will eaſily appear that they can belong to no æra but that very remote one to which the tranſlator has aſſigned them.

A COURSE of many centuries muſt have intervened, before theſe compoſitions could become, as we have ſeen they were, the common tales, ſongs, and proverbs of a people. We can likewiſe trace back the genius of the Galic poetry and manners for ſeveral ages; and find by the difference, that it is far beyond theſe we muſt look for his æra †. The utter ſilence about Clans bids us retire ſtill farther. To which we are alſo directed both by the names of places and perſons mentioned in the poems themſelves. In the time of Oſſian, the names of the Hebrides, like thoſe of the main land, were all deſcriptive and ſignificant; from which it is evident, he lived before their conqueſt by the Norwegians *, as they got at that time their pre-

this place can be traced out the very ſcene, and the very uncommon names of that epiſode, which of all the collection is perhaps the leaſt known to a Galic antiquary. The iſland to which the traitor Erath beguiled Dura ſtill retains his name of *Innis-Eraith*, "the iſland of Erath." The ferry and farm contiguous to it, derive from him alſo their name; and about a mile diſtant from it is another farm, conſiſting of an extenſive heath bounded by a large mountain-ſtream, and ſtill retaining from that unfortunate lady the name of *Dura'in*, "the ſtream of Daura." And what further confirms that this is the ſcene deſcribed by Oſſian is, that ſeveral places within ſight of it are denominated from Connal, and others of his heroes, whoſe names are better known. As nobody can ſuppoſe that the tranſlator of Oſſian could thus ſtumble, by chance, on names the leaſt common and places the leaſt known, ſo as to make ſo many circumſtances exactly correſpond with his poems, without his ever knowing it, we muſt certainly allow this a moſt confounding proof of their authenticity.

† The decline of the Galic poetry was much owing to the abolition of the Druids, who inſtructed and ſuperintended the order of the bards, as alſo to the office being made hereditary. The Galic manners degenerated equally faſt after Kenneth M'Alpin removed the ſeat of royalty from Caledonia, to the country of the Picts whom he ſubdued.

* They were entirely conquered by Harold Harfager in 875; and ſo much infeſted

preſent names, which are not, like thoſe on the continent, of a Gaelic etymon. The names of perſons in theſe countries likewiſe, ever ſince the introduction of Chriſtianity, were almoſt all derived from apoſtles, ſaints, martyrs, miſſionaries, or crowned heads: but the proper names of Oſſian are quite of another caſt; all deſcriptive. This, together with his notions of a future ſtate, which are ſo different from thoſe which Chriſtianity teaches, will clearly evince that he lived before it was propagated in this part of the kingdom. His tranſlator gives ſeveral reaſons for placing him about the end of the third, or the beginning of the fourth century*; and to enter into any nicer diſquiſition on the head, were as idle as it would be uſeleſs. That his poems are ancient and authentic, is all that we contend for. And, as we hope that ſufficient evidence has been given for this, we proceed,

III. To anſwer ſome objections which have been made to their being genuine. Of theſe the moſt weighty are,—That ſuch an early period could not produce ſuch poems;—That if it had, they could not be ſo long preſerved in ſo illiterate a country;—and, That the editions of theſe poems are not now more numerous.—Each of theſe objections we ſhall endeavour to diſcuſs in order. Leſſer obſtacles may perhaps meet us in our way, which we ſhall endeavour to remove as they occur.

1. With regard to the firſt objection, there are many reaſons that may account, not only for ſuch excellent poetry, but even refined morals, being found in ſo early a period of ſociety. Among all nations

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feſted by the Danes for a conſiderable time before, that they might be ſaid to be in their poſſeſſion. Torfœus in Orcad. p. 10, 11. and Ware's Antiq. p. 57. &c.

* Diſſertation prefixed to Oſſian's poems.

whoſe earlier ſtages we have any account of, poetry was the firſt and favourite ſtudy. In poetry, legiſlators gave their codes, oracles their anſwers, and prieſts their precepts. In Greece, the old academy of the world, poetry was in this repute, not only before the introduction of letters, when the aſſiſtance which it gave the memory might plead in its favours; but, even long after that period, no compoſition could be reliſhed that was deſtitute of the charms of poetry. Not only Orpheus and Linus, but the leſs ancient Heſiod and Homer, lived ſome ages before Pherecides *, who, according to Pliny, was the firſt who wrote proſe in the Greek language.

Among the nations of the Eaſt, poetry had the ſame early attention paid to it. The book of Job, the oldeſt in the world, is highly poetical. In the weſtern parts, the remains of Runic and Celtic poetry ſhew how early and how carefully this art was cultivated; inſomuch, that ſome nations could never be reconciled even to the ſcriptures till they had got them in the form of poems †. And in the new world, the Spaniards and others have found excellent poetry among tribes entirely unacquainted with letters. To ſupply this defect, indeed, it was neceſſary this art ſhould be encouraged by them, as well as for the high pleaſure which it yielded. A deſire of perpetuating their names, their actions, and uſeful inventions, is natural to mankind. And this, in early periods, muſt have been truſted to tradition, which could not preſerve it long without the charms of verſe and harmony of numbers. This alone could render the vehicle ſo light and eaſy of conveyance, that the tranſ-

* He lived about the time of Cyrus, as did alſo Phalaris, who wrote ſuch elegant letters, and Æſop the writer of the fables. It is not foreign to our purpoſe to obſerve, that theſe acquired all at once a perfection which diſtances all future imitation.

† Du Chene, ap. Pellout. hiſt. des Celt. 2. 10.

tranſmitting of it to poſterity would be rather a pleaſure than a burden. And once the practice was begun, the policy of every ſtate found it uſeful to encourage it, as the beſt means of ſtirring up every noble ſpirit to imitate thoſe actions which he heard ſo highly praiſed.

The language of infant ſtates is likewiſe, as was obſerved above, from its want of copiouſneſs, ſtrong, figurative, and poetical. Their paſſions are unfettered and free, and their imagination bold and active. Theſe are all circumſtances more favourable to poetry, than any in the more advanced ſtages of ſociety; and thoſe poets who have flouriſhed neareſt this early ſtate in any country, are generally they who have beſt ſucceeded, if a happy genius ſeconded their ſituation. Hence the Muſes have always their reſidence aſſigned them in the mountains: An allegory, by which the poets mean, that the hunting ſtate, in which the body is unbroken with toil, and the mind eaſy and unencumbered with care, is the proper epocha of poetry. Now this was the æra in which Oſſian lived; ſo that his ſituation was rather advantageous than otherwiſe, if he had but a genius to improve it.

But beſides theſe circumſtances, common to the ancient Caledonians with other ſtates in the like period, there are others of a more peculiar nature, which muſt have had a happy influence both upon their poetry and morals.—Of theſe the inſtitution of the Bards and Druids deſerves the firſt mention. The Druids of Britain in general were in ſuch eſtimation for their knowledge abroad, that from Gaul, and other neighbouring countries, diſciples flocken to them as to a ſeminary of learning. At home, they were held in a ſtill higher veneration. They were not only the prieſts

and

and philoſopners, but virtually the very ſovereigns of every ſtate where their religion prevailed. They had the education of the young, the direction of the old, and no buſineſs whatever of any moment could be done without them. In natural philoſophy, they had all the experiments of paſt ages flowing down to them in one uninterrupted channel, which was perpetually growing; inſomuch that it required a ſtudy of twenty years to become maſters of their knowledge. And in morals, we may ſuppoſe they made at leaſt as great a proficiency as the philoſophers of other countries; conſidering their many and ſingular advantages. Accordingly, we are told, that, " contemning all ſublunary things, they raiſed their thoughts to ſublimer objects, and boldly aſſerted the ſoul's immortality †." In a word, no ſet of men were ever poſſeſſed of ſo much authority, or were held in ſo high a veneration, as the Druids. Every thing in this world was at their diſpoſal; and they pretended, and were believed to have alſo, by a delegated power, the diſpoſal of whatever was deſirable in the other. What wonder, then, if every noble and amiable virtue flouriſhed, under the patronage of this venerable order, to the degree that we find it repreſented in the poems of Oſſian? Or what wonder if poetry arrived at ſuch perfecfection, in a country where there was not only, from age to age, a ſtanding order of poets, but ſuch men as theſe to be its teachers, encouragers, and rewarders?

The bards, too, whom we may call a lower order of religious, contributed greatly to form both the poetry and the morals of the period we ſpeak of. No venal, mercenary tribe, were then the bards. Next to the Druids, they were of all men the moſt reſpected

† Amm. Marcel. l. 15.

ed †. They were choſen from the moſt promiſing geniuſes, and from the beſt families; inſomuch that we find thoſe of the royal line itſelf, as Oſſian, Fergus, and Fillan, ambitious of being in the number. They were formed and educated in the college of the Druids; and it depended on their behaviour and merit, whether they might not, one day, be initiated into their myſteries, and admitted as members. With the advantages of this education, and the ſpurs of this ambition, the bards would exert their talents for poetry, and recommend to the utmoſt every virtue which the Druids taught them to inculcate. And as every one's preſent fame and future happineſs depended entirely, as they ſuppoſed, on the praiſe of the bard, every one would ſtrive to the utmoſt to deſerve it. By this means, the manners of the nation, by precept, by example, and by preſent as well as future intereſt, would ſoon be formed. Every great and amiable quality of the ſoul would expand itſelf; and, where every thing contributed to forward its growth, would ſoon arrive, in fact, at a height, which, in our poliſhed times, we are apt to conſider as only ideal, or poetical.

That the ſongs of the bards ſhould have ſo much influence on the manners of the Celtic tribes, will appear leſs ſtrange, if we obſerve the effect which poetry has had on other nations in the like early period. When the poets aſcribe to ſongs the power of bringing down the moon from heaven, charming the fierceſt animals, and making rapid rivers ſtop their falling waters to liſten to the poet's numbers ‡; they can certainly mean no leſs, than that poetry

† After the extinction of the Druids, the bards are ſaid to have been for many ages the next in dignity to the king. The Scandinavian bards, or ſcalds, held the ſame privilege; and, in the reign of the great Harold Harfager, ſat next the king at table. Torfæus in Orcad.

‡ See Virg. ecl. 8.

try has power to raiſe the moſt violent paſſions, and to lay them; that it has power to change the nature, to conjure, to tranſport, to raviſh. To what a degree this power was then exerted, is a matter of which we can form now no juſt idea. For, in the infancy of ſociety, as in the infancy of life, the paſſions are not only more powerful and violent, but alſo more ſudden, flexible, and yielding. In either caſe, till a certain advanced period is reached, we meet with no cool, calm, and deliberate determinations. Hence the greater influence which poetry has in that early period on the paſſions of mankind. An influence atteſted by the annals of the hiſtorian, no leſs than by the fable and allegory of the poet. There, to mention but a few inſtances, and theſe too in a much more advanced period than what we ſpeak of, we find Sappho kindling in many breaſts a paſſion, by no other beauty than that of her poems; we find the monſter Phalaris melted into man, by the muſe of Steſichorus; Alexander leaping to his arms, as in a phrenzy, at the ſong of Timotheus; and the diſpirited Spartans rouſed to courage by the ſongs of Tyrtæus. In conſequence of this influence of poetry over the paſſions, we find, that in all ſtates, the minority of which we have any account of, it has been encouraged and honoured; the perſon of its profeſſors held ſacred, and their character reſpected. The greateſt lawgivers, as Lycurgus and Solon, practiſed or patronized the art; and the greateſt warriors, as Alexander and Cæſar. The holieſt men, as Moſes, David, and Solomon, were eminent for their ſkill in it; and even the wild Scythian hero, Odin, thought it his intereſt as a ſtateſman, to practiſe and recommend it. To poliſhed nations, poetry affords pleaſure; but to infant ſtates, it affords not only pleaſure, but advantage. And, for the

the one reaſon or the other, both have never failed to recommend it, by making it an ingredient in their future felicity; all ages, nations, and religions, agreeing in giving muſic and poetry a place in their paradiſe, however much they differ in their other notions of it.—If, therefore, poetry has been thus early cultivated by other nations, and allowed to have ſuch influence upon their morals, much more might it be expected to flouriſh here, under its peculiar advantages, ſo as to produce all the effects aſcribed to it upon the Caledonian heroes.

It may be thought ſtill leſs ſtrange, that characters ſo reſpectable as the Celtic bards, ſhould, under the auſpices of the Druids, have ſuch influence in forming the manners of their age, when we conſider, that, in later and leſs pliant times, ſuch ſtrolling ſongſters as the *Provençal Trobadores* have been able to give riſe to the romantic ſyſtem of knight-errantry. The truth is, when the human mind becomes familiar with any ſet of ideas, and revolves them over for a long time, it takes pleaſure in them from acquaintance, and contracts a likeneſs to them from the principle of imitation. In any period of ſociety, therefore, the ſongs which men are moſt converſant with, muſt contribute much to form their temper and behaviour. But they do this more eſpecially in the earlieſt ſtages, when the ideas, the tranſactions, the wants, and the cares of men are few; and when the mind, having little elſe to attend to, "hums" continually its ſong, and broods with pleaſure over that favourite object.

In accounting for the refinement of ſentiments aſcribed to the age of Fingal, we may join with the effects of poetry, thoſe of its ſiſter-art, muſic. The influence of this upon the paſſions, is, like

the other, univerſally allowed to be exceeding great. It muſt therefore have been early laid hold of, as a proper handle for forming the morals of men. Accordingly, the poets, who always couch truth under their fables, have aſcribed to the lyres of Orpheus, Arion, and Amphion, the miraculous power, not only of taming the wildeſt of men, but of charming even wild beaſt and fiſhes. Nay, they tell us, that even the inanimate creation was wrought upon by ſuch ſounds. Raviſhed by their magic force, trees deſcended from their mountains; ſtones roſe from their quarry; cities lifted their ſpiry heads into the clouds; rivers ſtopt, or changed their courſe, to liſten; and fields, before diſmal and dark, aſſumed a ſmile of joy. Even the inexorable Pluto himſelf relented with the irreſiſtible charms of the lyre of Orpheus, and, grimly ſmiling, reſigned to him his loved Eurydice.—Whatever allowance we make here for poetical liberty, we ſhall ſtill have this much left, that muſic has a vaſt influence over the paſſions, and had a principal hand in the firſt civilization of mankind. This much modern, as well as ancient, poets hint to us, when they tell us that

> "Muſic has charms to ſoothe the ſavage breaſt,
> "To ſoften rocks, and bend the knotted oak."

But, ſhould any one think, that truth cannot be had from poets, we may add, that on this ſubject, divines, philoſophers, and lawgivers, have ſpoken, though in a different language, the ſame meaning. So ſenſible were the ancients of the connexion between muſic and morals, that their religion and laws had generally the ſuperintendency of the one as well as of the other. In Egypt, in Crete, and in Sparta, the laws regulated the number of ſtrings in the lyre; and the laſt-mentioned ſtate baniſhed Timotheus for the crime

crime of adding to them. Even in ſcripture, the charming of an evil ſpirit, and the calming of the moſt violent ſallies of nature, is aſcribed to muſic, which the religious of almoſt all ages have adopted into their ſacred ſervice; if we except a few, who can perhaps give no orthodox reaſon for diſcarding this great help both of mending the manners, and of heightening the devotion. To a ſtranger, at leaſt, they ſeem to lie under a vaſt diſadvantage, in their attempts to form the heart with fewer tools than heaven and reaſon have allowed them, and cannot ſo eaſily ſoar aloft after taking off a part of their wings. But leaving theſe to affect that ſpirituality on earth, which, in their own belief, even the worſhip of heaven does not pretend to, we return to our ſubject.

Music, we ſee, has been univerſally allowed to have an intimate connexion with the moral ſyſtem. The ancient Caledonians then, were a nation of muſicians. The art was not at all peculiar to the Bards, although they were the chief maſters of it. Every hero, every virgin, could "touch the harp, and melt the ſoul *." This univerſality of the art was probably owing in ſome meaſure to the ſimplicity of the inſtrument. In the ancient ſtates of Greece, the harp, conſiſting of only four ſtrings, was of ſo ſimple a conſtruction, that warriors, women, and even children, engaged in other purſuits and avocations, could play upon it. In Egypt the caſe was the ſame, inſomuch that even the Iſraelitiſh women, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of their bondage, could all of them play on inſtruments of muſic †. The Caledo-

* Beda gives us to underſtand, that, even in the 7th century, the harp was ſo generally played in Britain, that it was cuſtomary to hand it from one to one at their entertainments; and ſpeaks of one who was ſo aſhamed he could not play upon it, that he ſlunk away for fear of expoſing himſelf. L. 4. c. 24.

† Exod. xv. 20.

* Tem-

nian or Britiſh harp we may ſuppoſe to have been, in its conſtruction, equally ſimple, and in its effects equally powerful.—In the viciſſitude of all human affairs, not only the ancient harp, but even the ancient ſcience of muſic, has been in a great meaſure loſt, and ſupplied only by what is made up of certain notes that fell into the fancy of a poor friar in chanting his matins *. But to whatever it was owing, the ancient muſic had ſuch a power of moving the heart and opening the ſluice of the tears, as ſome would paſs now for poetical fiction; whilſt better judges reſolve it into true philoſophy, and ſhew that the effect of muſic upon the paſſions became leſs powerful in proportion as the harmony became more complex †. This natural effect of the ancient muſic would be greatly heightened by the excellency of the Caledonian ſongs, with which their muſic was always accompanied ‡. And if the conſtant repetition of theſe, which breathed every tender feeling, kindled every noble paſſion, and celebrated every brave and generous action, had, ſingly, ſuch effect as has been already remarked, how irreſiſtible muſt have been their force when the harp joined all its charms in their aid!—The ancient Caledonian poetry is full of ſtrokes of nature and of paſſion. The muſic would be congenial to it; tender, plaintive, and moving; a caſt which ſtill diſtinguiſhes the oldeſt of the Caledonian airs, and which of all others is beſt calculated to impreſs the heart with thoſe ſoft and ſympathetic feelings which are moſt favourable to morals. Its effect would be ſtill more in-

* Temple's Miſcel. vol. ii.

† See Gregory's Comp. View, and Brown's Hiſtory of Muſic.

‡ Diodorus affirms this of the Celts in general. It appears to have been the practice of other ancient nations alſo; for Plato calls inſtrumental muſic, by itſelf, an inſipid thing, and treats it with great contempt.

increaſed by the reaſons formerly mentioned of the paſſions and feelings of men being then ſtrong, and the imagination warm, and eaſily yielding to every impreſſion of enthuſiaſm and rapture. Men were not yet aſhamed to indulge their innocent and tender feelings, when the ſoul was " harrowed up" with either pleaſure or pain. Under the dominion of emotions not peculiar to the warmth of eaſtern climes, but the univerſal offspring of infant nature, they could freely " lift up their voice and weep," whether grief or joy demanded the ſympathetic tear. In ſuch an age then, ſuch means, begun too when the mind was young and moſt ſuſceptible of impreſſion, and not only daily but hourly repeated, could not fail to give the ſoul a poliſh and a ſmoothneſs now hardly to be credited. Every repetition would, by aſſociation of ideas, " conjure up" all the emotions which the ſame ſong had formerly produced, with the ideas of innocent and early days annexed to them, and with the image of, perhaps, the lover, father, friend, or acquaintance, to whoſe memory the piece was conſecrated: while at the ſame time a glow of emulation would mix with theſe tendereſt feelings of the ſoul, fanned with the pleaſing hope of receiving one day the like fame. Call him a lion or a tyger that could not be ſoftened and civilized by thoſe means; if he was a human being, he could not reſiſt them. If the virtues of the ancient Caledonians, conſidering theſe cauſes, had been leſs perfect, the wonder had been greater than their being ſo exalted as Oſſian deſcribes them.

From the plain way of living and other circumſtances told us of the age of Fingal, we are apt to connect with it the idea of barbarous and ſavage. Some other tribes in the hunting ſtate have been

been found ſo *; and we infer that the Caledonians were like them, although the peculiar circumſtances already mentioned were ſufficient to create a vaſt difference. With theſe, one other circumſtance muſt be taken into the account, which is, that though this people were then in the hunting ſtate, or but juſt emerging out of it, they were far from being a very infant colony. The Highlands of Scotland, owing to the untowardneſs of their ſoil and climate, may be ſaid to be ſtill in a ſtate of paſturage, or but very little beyond it. And if they have remained in this ſecond ſtage for fifteen hundred years, they might poſſibly take ſo long a ſpace to paſs through the firſt, and by that means have time enough, under

* Many have queſtioned whether civilized ſtates are poſſeſſed of more virtue than thoſe to which we give the name of *barbarous*. There are at leaſt more exceptions to the common opinion than the Caledonians. Tacitus aſcribes to the old rude Germans all the virtues which Oſſian aſcribes to his heroes, who were originally the ſame people, and had the ſame cuſtoms, religion, and laws. "The morals of that people (ſays that hiſtorian) exceed the beſt laws deviſed by other nations;" Germ. c. 19. Raynal gives the ſame character to the tribes of Canada, rude and unpoliſhed as they ſeemed. "They were (ſays he) obliging, diſintereſted, ſerious, fond of independence, benevolent, and humane. They diſcovered their benevolence by taking great care of widows, orphans, and infirm people; and by ſharing their proviſions with the unfortunate and diſtreſſed. They ſhewed their hoſpitality by keeping open, by day and night, their huts and tables, to travellers and ſtrangers, &c." And, with regard to their poetry, the ſame author ſays, that "their ſoul expreſſed what their eyes ſaw; that their language painted natural objects in ſtrong colouring; that the boldeſt metaphors were familiar to them in common converſation, and that their public ſpeeches were full of images, energy, and pathos." The excellency of this people's morals was probably owing in a great meaſure to their love of poetry; for their hiſtorian particularly remarks, that they were fond of ſongs. The darkeſt and moſt gloomy vices of the ſoul are quite inconſiſtent with a high reliſh for poetry and muſic. Hence the niceſt obſervers of human nature have remarked, that from ſouls of this refined caſt nothing unfair or cruel is to be dreaded; but that, on the contrary,

> The man who has not muſic in himſelf,
> And is not mov'd with concord of ſweet ſound,
> Is fit for treaſon, ſtratagem, and ſpoils.
>
> SHAKESPEAR.

under their peculiar advantages, to form their morals. If we ſuppoſe the mountains ſtocked but with a fifth or tenth of the animals which they now ſupport, they would afford ample proviſion for the conſumers, who do not ſeem to have been numerous, and who were always thinned by war, and by colonies to the adjacent Hebrides, and to the moſt contiguous parts of Ireland.—Here, then, was little room for quarrels or feuds; which would not, in any event, find a ready entrance among a tribe diſtinct from all others, cloſely allied among themſelves, and, as always happens in ſuch caſes, ſtrong in their attachments, and even violent in their friendſhips. It is only when ſociety advances, and the numbers and wants of men grow many, that their intereſts begin to juſtle and interfere, ſo as to kindle, and by their colliſion bring to light, a thouſand vices till then unknown. The Caledonians were ſtill farther removed from theſe extravagancies, by confining their deſires within narrow bounds, and being contented with only the neceſſaries of life *. Whenever theſe began to fail in this mountain or valley, it was but ſhifting to the next, which was covered with plenty. Strabo tells us, that the Britons, in general, removed from one place to another; and the remains of old buildings, and the names of places, in all corners of the Highlands, prove this to have been the manner of Fingal.

This method of procuring ſubſiſtence, at the very eaſy expence of

* Theſe were greatly reduced by their eating only once a-day. In Galic our names for *breakfaſt*, *dinner*, and *ſupper*, are quite modern and exotic. *Lòn*, or "daily meal," ſupplied till of late the place of all the three. That the ſame was the caſe with ſome other ancient nations, appears from the ſaying of the citizen of Abdera, who "thanked the gods that Xerxes and his army ate but one meal a-day."

* Vid-

of a little amuſement, had a benign aſpect on every virtue; but was peculiarly favourable to that delicacy with which we find the tender ſex always treated by Oſſian's heroes. Unlike thoſe tribes to whom they are ſometimes unjuſtly compared, the ancient Caledonians had no lands to till, nor any rigorous ſervices to impoſe upon their females. The only occupation, hunting, was the province and the pleaſure of the men. So that nothing remained for the other ſex, but "to weave the robe for their love."—We would allow female charms and female virtue that deference which they never fail to procure when properly exerted, and which make them capable of ſubduing even thoſe who can ſubdue the elephant and the lion. But leaving theſe altogether out of the queſtion, the reaſon juſt now mentioned, in concurrence eſpecially with thoſe taken notice of above, is ſufficient to account for the delicacy with which the fair ſex are treated by our Caledonian heroes. They who made this objection to the poems of Oſſian, might obſerve it was not peculiar to this people. Many other nations called by the name of *barbarians* had the ſame eſteem for their women. When Hannibal paſſed through Gaul to croſs the Alps, it was an article in a treaty made with him, that if a Gaul offered any injury to a Carthaginian, he ſhould be tried before the court of the Gauliſh women. The Germans allowed their women the like privileges. And we find the Ælians and Piſans ſubmitting their differences to a court of ſixteen women. Such alſo was the veneration of the Ethiopians for their matrons, that, in the very heat of their quarrels, they laid down their arms if one of them but made her appearance*.

In

* Vid. Plut. de Mulier. Polyæn. Strat. l. 7. Tacit. Hiſt. 4 61. Pauſan. Eliac. &c.—Even the Scandinavians, though leſs civilized than the Celts, held at that time the female ſex in the higheſt regard. Vid. Lord Kaims's Sketches.

In Britain, in particular, as we are told by Tacitus and others, women were held in ſuch honour, at that time, as to be often intruſted with the reins of government, and even with the command of armies. And there are inſtances on record, which ſhew they were not unworthy of ſo much confidence ‡.

SIMPLE as the age of Fingal was, there are many reaſons that may induce us to think, that the Caledonians were, long before his time, a people; and that the contemplative Druids had ſpace enough to form a ſyſtem of morals, as well as the Bards to improve their poetry.—How early Britain was inhabited after the deluge or diſperſion, cannot be eaſily aſcertained; but we may ſuppoſe it happened in a very few centuries. Thoſe nations that moved weſtward, confined by the Mediterranean on the left, and by the Hyperborean colds on the right, keeping clear of woods and moraſſes, and ſcorning the toils and cares of tillage and paſturage, while the tract before them allured them with the promiſe of ſuſtenance by the amuſement of hunting, would thus arrive with a pretty rapid progreſs in theſe countries †. The inhabitants of the ſouth of Britain carried on a tin trade with very diſtant nations, according to *Sammes* and others, before the time of the Trojan war;

‡ When theſe were the manners of the South-Britons, Fingal's predeceſſors, who had aſſiſted them as commanders in chief of the Caledonian forces when invaded by the Romans, had opportunity enough to learn from them, if we ſuppoſe that before then they fell ſhort of them. And the manners of the better ſort are always a law to their inferiors; ſo that their people, who were continually about their perſon, might all learn of Fingal or Trathal.

† Neither the ſtrait of the Helleſpont, or even of Dover, would be ſuch an obſtacle as we are apt to imagine. A few rafts might eaſily tranſport ſuch as did not value their lives too much to make the experiment; if we ſuppoſe the children of thoſe who built Babel had ſo ſoon loſt all the arts of their forefathers, as not to be able to join together a few planks.

and were ſo ancient a people in the times of Cæſar and Diodorus, that they had loſt all tradition of their origin; inſomuch, that theſe authors ſuppoſed them to have been "a creation by themſelves." And we may believe, that no part of the iſland would apply itſelf to agriculture or commerce, while another part of it could give ſubſiſtence only for amuſement.

THERE are in the Highlands many monuments that ſhew their populouſneſs and power in an æra long prior to that of Fingal. Of theſe are eſpecially the carns or mounts of ſtones raiſed over the aſhes of their great men; the number of whom, and the flouriſhing ſtate of the country, we may conjecture, not only from the multiplicity of theſe, but alſo from their ſize, and from the immenſe diſtance from which the materials were ſometimes carried. By a ſtrange revolution, however, which only a long courſe of ages could have brought about, this ceremony, from being a mark of diſtinction, was converted by the Druids, long before the time of Fingal, to a puniſhment on the moſt infamous criminals. The remains of ſeveral vitrified towers ſtill to be ſeen in the Highlands, ſeem to prove, that the inhabitants of theſe countries enjoyed even the comforts of life in a period more remote than the age of Fingal, or the invaſion of the Romans, as no ſuch mode of architecture has been ſince practiſed *. The veſtiges of many other buildings too, though not vitrified, ſeem to claim an equal antiquity, both from their names and appearances. Walls half ſunk in earth, their ſtones half mouldered into duſt, and the very rocks on which they ſtood often half conſumed by the encroachments of another element, are "tales of other years" indeed. Theſe and various other

* See Williams on vitrified ruins.

ther reaſons have induced ſeveral ſearchers into antiquity to think that barbariſm and civility had run their circle more than once in theſe countries; which appear to have been in a flouriſhing condition long before they had ſunk into that dark night from which they are but ſtill emerging *.

MANY other reaſons might be aſſigned for the excellency of the poetry and morals aſcribed to the æra of Oſſian; but as this head has been purſued too far already, we ſhall only ſum up the argument, and proceed to the next capital objection.—It has been obſerved,

* Againſt theſe arguments for the antiquity of the Caledonians even in the time of Fingal, it is no ſufficient objection that they were ſtill ignorant of agriculture, deſtitute of riches, and not acquainted with many arts or ſciences. Inſtances of the like nature may be found in hiſtory. Attica muſt have been many ages inhabited, before Ceres, much about the reign of David, brought thither the art of ſowing corn. The Scythians and Spartans had the ſame ſovereign contempt for ſilver and gold; and the ancient Gauls, who were the ſame people, and had the ſame language and religion, with the firſt inhabitants of Britain, made no other uſe of theſe metals than to throw them into the Maſſilian lake, as the moſt acceptable ſervice they could do the gods. As to arts, the Caledonians, like many other ancient nations, lived in ſuch contented ſimplicity, that they thought but few of them neceſſary. Theſe few, however, ſeem to have reached a maturity that we are not aware of. The working of iron they underſtood well: at leaſt their arms, the only thing for which they needed the forge, ſeem to have been well tempered. Their robes, ſo often compared to the "bow of the ſhower," ſhew they underſtood, not only the manufacturing of cloaths; but could alſo give them a variety of tints, for which their rocks and vegetables ſupplied them, as they ſtill do, with materials. Their ſhips, in which they performed ſuch long and dangerous voyages, muſt have been well built and of a conſiderable ſize. And the remains of their vitrified houſes ſhew they were no ſtrangers to the art of lodging themſelves comfortably, when the inclemency of the ſeaſon required it. Their muſical inſtruments need ſcarce be mentioned, it being allowed they were pretty ſimple, as were alſo their litters, or chariots of war.---Such as think it abſurd to aſcribe chariots of war to the age and country of Oſſian, may conſult Pomponius Mela, (l. 3.) who tells that the Britons in general fought in ſuch cars and chariots.

† To

ſerved, that if any art could be ſaid to have been cultivated with all poſſible care by the Caledonians, it was poetry. This, beſides the predilection of all ſtates in its favours, enjoyed, among them, peculiar advantages. Their manner of life was extremely favourable to it; as was alſo that age of ſociety in which they lived. Their language, original and ſtrong †, was alſo capable of every inflexion and modulation, and peculiarly adapted to expreſs every paſſion, and to ſuit every ſtrain, whether ſublime or tender. The education of the bards, under ſuch maſters as the Druids, was highly advantageous to them. Themſelves, too, an order of ſuch importance to the public, were choſen from the beſt families and moſt promiſing geniuſes. And whatever talents they had, they wanted no ſpur to exert. For their own honour and reſpect, with the virtues of the community, depended, in a great meaſure, on their diligence and ſucceſs. To facilitate this ſucceſs, they were furniſhed not only with the fruits of their own long ſtudy and obſervation, but alſo with the compoſition of all the generations before them, ſince ever "the light of the ſong" had firſt dawned; as they had always a ſtanding order or college of poets to preſerve them and add to them. They had the advantage of one another's converſation, which would excite their emulation, and make them aſpire

† To what has been remarked on this particular in a former note, (p. 90.) we may add, that Plato (in Cratyl.) makes that difference between the language of the gods and that of men, which Homer alſo ſpeaks of, conſiſt entirely in the one's being original and expreſſive of the thing ſignified, while the other is in a great meaſure arbitrary and compounded. That philoſopher further obſerves, that more of this originality, or correſpondence between the object and the name, was to be found in the language of the barbarians, than in the Greek tongue. The ſame notion ſeems to be applicable to the language of Adam in paradiſe, from Gen. ii. 19. a paſſage which Plato might probably have ſeen.

aſpire to eminence. They were always preſent, and generally engaged in every grand ſcene that was tranſacted; which could not fail to inſpire their muſe with the trüeſt and nobleſt kind of fire. Their mind too, beſides being converſant with a people of well-formed morals at home, was opened and expanded by their frequent intercourſe with other nations around them, who were long before then civilized by their commerce with foreigners, and with whom the Caledonians had the advantage of converſing in their own language.—Now, when all theſe favourable circumſtances, and many more, concurred with a firſt-rate genius, as in the caſe of Oſſian, what wonder if they produced a very celebrated poet?—To think that the only avenue to knowledge, or the only cultivation of the mind, is by books, (though the Druids and their diſciples might not want theſe neither), is a narrow and a wrong way of thinking. Converſation, action, and example, open and expand it much more powerfully. To hear, to converſe, and to vie with Ullin, Alpin, Carril, and Ryno, would be of more avail to Oſſian than a thouſand volumes. For which reaſon geniuſes have been obſerved to appear generally in cluſters or conſtellations. It has been the opinion of ſome, that books and dead ſtudy rather cramp and confine a great genius than improve it. Be this as it will, it is certain, that moſt of thoſe poets who have made the greateſt figure were, like Homer, Shakeſpear, and Oſſian, for the moſt part indebted for it to a native fire and enthuſiaſm of genius, to which, perhaps, the learning of the ſchools and the precepts of Ariſtotle would have done little ſervice. Poetic talents are entirely the gift of that univerſal mother Nature, who is not ſo partial to her children as ſome are apt to ſuſpect her. Trojans or Rutilians,

north

north the Tweed or ſouth of it, are diſtinctions unknown to her in the diſtribution of her favours. On both ſides this river and that mountain, they are equally her children. She touches alike the lyre of Homer and the harp of Oſſian; and equally inſpires the ode of the Laplander, and the love-ſong of the Arcadian.

2. We now proceed to thoſe cauſes to which we owe, for ſo many ages, the preſervation of Oſſian. Of theſe, the inſtitution of the Bards deſerves our firſt notice. In a country, the only one perhaps in the world, in which there was always, from the earlieſt period to almoſt the preſent age, a ſtanding order of poets, we cannot reaſonably be ſurpriſed, either at finding excellent poems compoſed, or, after being compoſed, carefully preſerved from oblivion. A great part of the buſineſs of this order was to watch over the poems of Oſſian. In every family of diſtinction, there was at leaſt one principal bard, and always a number of diſciples, who vied with each other in having theſe poems in the greateſt perfection; ſo that if a line was added, altered, or left out, another would not fail to ſhew his zeal and ſuperiority, by correcting him. They had likewiſe frequent opportunities, in attending their chiefs to other families, of meeting in crowds and rehearſing theſe poems, which, at home or abroad, were night and day their employment. —Should the inſtitution of the bards laſt for ever, the poems of Oſſion could never periſh.

Nor were they only the bards of great families who were here concerned. The vaſſal, equally fond of the ſong with his ſuperior, entertained himſelf in the ſame manner; and all, under his influence, by contributing to his amuſement in this way, were ſure of obtaining his favour. This, with a life free from care, a ſpirit unbroken

broken by labour, and a ſpace of time unoccupied by any other employment or diverſion, contributed to render the Highlanders a nation of ſingers and poets. From the recital of a variety of compoſitions, they would naturally be led to make compariſons of their merit. This would form their taſte better than all the rules of the critics. The conſequence of this taſte would be a predilection in favour of the poems of Oſſian; the ſuperior merit of which was ſufficient to procure them immortality from a people leſs addicted to the tale and the ſong than were the Highlanders of paſt ages.

Every reaſon indeed, private or public, that can be ſuppoſed, helped to preſerve theſe remains of antiquity. They inſpired ſuch a brave and martial ſpirit, ſuch love to the country, and ſuch fidelity to the chief, as made it much the intereſt of the chieftains, or body-politic, to preſerve them. For this reaſon, probably, no leſs than for their entertainment, were they led to keep a family-bard. To the poems of Oſſian we may attribute a good ſhare of that martial ſpirit and enthuſiaſm for war, till of late, ſo remarkable in the Highlands. This ſpirit flouriſhed with the poems of Oſſian; and, in a great meaſure, it alſo died with them.

It was likewiſe the intereſt of the religious to preſerve theſe compoſitions. They well knew how nearly the morality of any people is connected with the ſongs which they are continually repeating. The human heart, they knew, muſt always draw a tincture from thoſe ideas which it is not only much converſant with, but which come alſo recommended with the united charms of muſic and poetry. To this it is owing, that, in all religions, ſinging the praiſes of ſuperior beings, or of the Supreme, made a conſiderable

able part of the worſhip; in hopes that the mind, by the contemplation of ſuch perfections, might naturally be led to their imitation. And on the ſame principle, poems or ſongs that breathed ſuch ſentiments of juſtice, generoſity, humanity, and every great and amiable virtue, deſerved no leſs, from the preachers of the nobleſt morality, than to be encouraged and regarded. They were too wiſe to do otherwiſe; eſpecially as the mythology of theſe poems laid a proper foundation for ſuch ſuperſtructures as thoſe prieſts were ſometimes fond of building. One ſhould rather think they would be diſpoſed to add ſome things to the poems of Oſſian, than to take any thing away from them. But ſuch a number of bards as guarded them, made it impoſſible to do the one or the other. How narrowly theſe looked after them in this reſpect, no other proof need be required than their having in them ſo little appearance of religion; unleſs we allow that name to the notions of a future ſtate, of which they are ſo full.——To the objection, That no other religious ideas occur in Oſſian, it has been juſtly replied by his tranſlator and others, That it was never the manner of the bards to interlard their poetry with religion. Anciently, religion was the province of the Druids; who made it one of their firſt tenets, to conceal the greateſt part of it from all who were not initiated into their own order, of whoſe privileges they were remarkably jealous. Several alluſions, however, to the Druidical notions might be pointed out in the original of theſe poems, though they are generally overlooked, as they are now ſo long uſed in their current meaning, that ſcarce any body adverts they are metaphors; although the etymology ſhews they had once a different acceptation.

ceptation*.—At the time likewiſe in which theſe poems were compoſed, the old religion had retired to the ſhades; and there were ſtrong reaſons why the deſcendant of a family which it had endeavoured to depreſs, ſhould not go much out of his way to inquire for it. The new religion, on the other hand, did not then make its appearance; or did not venture to do it very openly. To caves, rocks, and ſuch ſequeſtered places, it did as yet confine itſelf. Even ſtill the Highland poets meddle but ſeldom and ſparingly with religion; which is perhaps no little ſign of a good judgment, as it is certain the true religion does not ſo eaſily tally with fiction, nor ſo well become it, as the mythology of the heathen poets.—Religion, however, is ſo natural to the mind of man, that it rather argues the poems in queſtion to be genuine, that they have ſo little of it. Thoſe real and particular cauſes which have been obſerved to operate at the time, were alone able to keep them ſo clear of it. But to return.

As it was the intereſt of the churchmen and chieftains to preſerve the poems of Oſſian, it was alſo the concern of the vulgar. Every clan boaſted its deſcent from ſome or other of the heroes whom theſe poems celebrate; and this was enough to recommend them, although the poetry had not been ſo excellent. Their being likewiſe ſo often addreſſed to ſome "ſon of the rock," by whom was underſtood either the tutelar ſaint of the place, or ſome of the firſt miſſionaries of Chriſtianity, never failed, till men grew more indifferent about religion, to procure them the higheſt veneration. —We may alſo obſerve, that every hill and dale they walked over was claſſic ground. They felt an enthuſiaſm which antiquaries need

* See note on the word *La bhrath*, in the poem of Dermid.

not be told of, when they trod it. Every mountain, rock, and river, around them, were immortalized in ſong. This ſong the very ſight of theſe objects would forcibly ſuggeſt; and every one would naturally hum it, as he walked along.—All the proverbs and cuſtoms to which theſe poems gave riſe, would operate in the ſame manner, whenever they were heard. The ſon would aſk what they meant; and the father with pleaſure would tell him.

On this head we may alſo obſerve, that the Highlanders being always a diſtinct and unſubdued people, contributed greatly to preſerve their cuſtoms, traditions, and poems. Their ſouthern neighbours ſometimes preſſed on them from the one ſide, and the Danes often harraſſed them on the other: but ſtill they kept poſſeſſion of their mountains; and, like a bow that has been held bent only by force, took the firſt opportunity of recovering their former ſituation.—And as the country in general, ſo every particular part of it had its fixed inhabitants. The ſame clan, from one generation to another, lived in the ſame valley, and became almoſt as much a part of it as the ſtream that watered it. This would produce an uncommon attachment to the place, and to the ancient ſong that ſpoke of it; which would, on all occaſions, make a part in their entertainment. How generally theſe poems were repeated, is manifeſt from the unfluctuated ſtate in which the Galic language has remained ſince the æra of their compoſition. They always formed a ſtandard, with which all ranks of people, in all parts of the country, were familiar; and from which, while it was ſo well known, their ſtyle could never greatly deviate. Hence a Highlander ſtill underſtands almoſt every line in the poems of Oſſian: whereas in Ireland, where the inhabitants did not remain ſo unmixed, and

where

where this ſtandard was not ſo generally attended to, the ſame language has undergone ſo conſiderable a change as to ſeem now rather a different tongue from the Scots Galic, and from theſe poems, than a different dialect *.

3. HAVING aſſigned ſo many cauſes for the preſervation of the poems of Oſſian, whilſt theſe cauſes operated; we now proceed to account for their being, in a great meaſure, loſt ſo ſuddenly.

THAT we have not the whole of the poems of Oſſian, or even of the collection tranſlated by Mr Macpherſon, we allow. Yet ſtill we have many of them; and of almoſt all a part. The building is not entire; but we have ſtill the grand ruins of it.

WITHIN a century back, the Highlands of Scotland have undergone a greater revolution than for ten before that period. With a quicker pace the feudal ſyſtem vaniſhed; property fluctuated; new laws and new cuſtoms ſtept in, and ſupplanted the old; and all this with ſuch ſudden and ſuch violent convulſions, as may well account for the ſhaking of a fabric, which before ſeemed to defy the tooth of time, and ſtood the wonder and delight of ages. Even ſince Mr Macpherſon gathered his collection, the amuſements, employments, and taſte, of the Highlanders, are much altered. A

* This obſervation is likewiſe no inconſiderable argument for the antiquity and authenticity of theſe poems. That the Galic language, ſpoken in diſtricts ſo diſtant and diſtinct, ſeparated by ſo many ſeas, mountains, heaths, and foreſts, and having little or no commerce or communication with each other, ſhould, notwithſtanding all this, remain for fifteen hundred years ſo little corrupted or varied as to appear ſtill like the language of almoſt one family, is difficult to account for on any other ſuppoſition than that of their having all one common ſtandard. Every body knows how faſt the Engliſh language fluctuated till ſuch a ſtandard was formed by the tranſlation of the ſcriptures.

greater attention to commerce, agriculture, and paſturage, has quite engroſſed that partial regard which was paid, even then, to the ſong of the bard. In twenty years hence, if manners continue to change ſo faſt as they do at preſent, the fainteſt traces ſhall ſcarce be found of our ancient tales and poems. " Oſſian himſelf is the laſt of his race, and he too ſhall ſoon be no more; for his gray branches are already ſtrewed on all the winds."

Among the cauſes which make our ancient poems vaniſh ſo rapidly, poverty and the iron rod ſhould, in moſt places, have a large ſhare. From the baneful ſhade of theſe *murderers of the muſe*, " the light of the ſong" muſt faſt retire. No other reaſon needs be aſked why the preſent Highlanders neglect ſo much the ſongs of their fathers.—Once the humble, but happy vaſſal, ſat at his eaſe, at the foot of his grey rock or green tree. Few were his wants, and fewer ſtill his cares; for he beheld his herds ſporting around him on his then unmeaſured mountain. He hummed the careleſs ſong, and tuned his harp with joy, while his ſoul in ſilence bleſſed his chieftain—Now—I was going to draw the compariſon;

" ——ſed Cynthius aurem
" Vellit, et admonuit."

It is with very different feelings that I mention, as another reaſon for the neglect of theſe and other ancient traditions, the growth of induſtry, which fills up all the blanks of time to better advantage; and eſpecially the increaſe of more uſeful knowledge, owing much to the benevolent and Chriſtian ſcheme of the honourable ſociety who have this for their object. This has diſcovered a richer quarry to the buſy and inquiſitive minds of our youth, and taught

taught them to ſpend their idle time to a far more valuable purpoſe than was done by their forefathers.

Above all, the extinction of the order of the bards haſtened the cataſtrophe of Oſſian's poems. In a ſingle family only has any of this order been retained ſince the beginning of this century, and the laſt in that family came down to our times in a very advanced life *. His favourite ſongs are ſaid to have been the poems of Oſſian. When age was coming on, memory beginning to fail, and no ſucceſſor like to appear, he had ſo many of them as he moſt admired committed to writing. By a happy coincidence, Mr Macpherſon overtook this bard, and got his treaſure. This fact, with the *red book* formerly mentioned, and ſome other MSS, accounts for his having found theſe poems in greater number and perfection than they could ever ſince be met with. Were there any inducement, however, adequate to the labour and expence of a careful ſearch, the beſt, though not perhaps the largeſt, part might ſtill be found. Yet this, it is probable, would not produce, in reſolved ſceptics, any more conviction than the many remains already ſhewn. Thoſe gentlemen, therefore, who take pains to ſatisfy them in this manner, might as well give them up with a ſmile, as the people of Iona did the man who would not believe that ever they had, in that remote country, any cathedral; for this good reaſon, becauſe he could ſee nothing but the ruins of a building, which, for ought he knew, he ſaid, might never have had a roof upon it.

But we ſuppoſe enough has been ſaid to convince the unprejudiced of the authenticity of Oſſian. As to the oppoſite claſs, ſince there

* Macvurich, bard to Clanronald.

there is no reaſoning with ſuch, we ſhall now take leave of them, perſuaded they can do the Celtic bard no real prejudice. We conſider him in the light of that good-natured Indian king, who deſired his ſervants, when they were driving away the flies that buzzed about his ears, to let them alone: as they were but creatures of a day, it was cruel, he ſaid, to deny them their ſhort paſtime; adding, that if they amuſed themſelves, they gave little concern to to him, ſince he knew their fate would ſoon rid him of their trouble.

HAVING ſaid ſo much for the authenticity of the poems tranſlated by Mr Macpherſon, it may be proper now to give ſome account of the few that follow. Early ſtruck with the beauty of ſome of them in the original, and finding that they had eſcaped the inquiries of the able and ingenious tranſlator of Oſſian, whoſe reſearches were chiefly confined to the more northern parts of the Highlands, I began to collect them for my own amuſement. Beyond this I had no further view, till the tranſlation of two ſhort fragments, at the deſire of ſome gentlemen who compoſed a Galic ſociety in Glaſgow, were given to the Meſſrs Foulis of that place, and printed by them about ten years ago, accompanied with a recommendation to the tranſlator to purſue the inquiry. A few other pieces of them happened to fall into the hands of a lady of diſtinguiſhed taſte, who ſhewed them, partly in the tranſlation, and partly in the original, to ſeveral judges of poetry in both the languages, who wiſhed to preſerve as many as could be got of them from ſinking into oblivion.—By theſe circumſtances, in a great meaſure

meaſure accidental, I was induced to beſtow more attention upon collecting as much as I poſſibly could of the ancient Galic poetry. In this taſk, however, I engaged with very moderate hopes of ſucceſs. The more weſterly part of the Highlands and Iſles, the only corner of the field which had not formerly been reaped, did not promiſe any thing of a rich harveſt. Upon examining, however, into the more inland and mountainous parts of the country, many pieces were found of no inconſiderable merit, though few of them were either entire or uncorrupted. What ſeemed in this caſe the moſt natural expedient, was to collect, from different quarters, as many editions as poſſible, in order to ſupply the defects, or rectify the miſtakes of one by the help of another. This, for ſeveral years, was my object, in which I was happily ſeconded by my ſituation; having reſided for a conſiderable time in various parts of the Weſt Highlands, particularly on the eſtates of Argyle and Breadalbine in that country; where a mountainous ſituation, or a leſs rigorous exertion of power, afforded ſome ſhelter to the Galic muſe, after ſhe had been hunted from moſt other places which ſhe had been uſed to frequent.

It might now be proper, for the ſatisfaction of the public, to mention every perſon who furniſhed a ſingle fragment of theſe poems. Had the expediency of this been earlier attended to, the liſt, though long, ſhould have been given complete; which cannot now be done, by mere recollection, after ten or twelve years have elapſed. The principal contributors, however, can eaſily be enumerated: and though it may be of little conſequence to the public to be preſented with the names of perſons who can be known only to a very few of them, yet in order to ſatisfy them ſo far as can be

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expected from a tranſlator, I have ſet down as many of their names below as will, I hope, be reckoned ſufficient *.

After the materials were collected, the next labour was to compare the different editions; to ſtrike off ſeveral parts that were manifeſtly ſpurious; to bring together ſome epiſodes that appeared to have a relation to one another, though repeated ſeparately; and to reſtore to their proper places ſome incidents that ſeemed to have run from one poem into another. In this I proceeded with all the care and fidelity due to ſuch a work. The moſt material of the alterations or tranſpoſitions which I have made, are taken notice of in the notes annexed to their reſpective poems, and it would be ſuperfluous here to repeat them. It might be equally unneceſſary, if candour did not require it, to mention the unavoidable neceſſity of throwing in ſometimes a few lines or ſentences (as remarked in the notes) to join ſome of theſe epiſodes together, and to lead the reader through a breach, which muſt have otherwiſe remained a hiatus. All theſe are liberties which neceſſity, in this caſe, enjoined, and which the laws of criticiſm, I hope, will allow. If any apolo-

* The perſons from whom I had the moſt, by oral recitation, were Duncan *(riach)* M'Nicol in Glenorchay, John M'Nicol near Tyndrum, John M'Phail in Lorn, Peter M'Dougal at Lochowſide, Malcolm M'Lerran near Kilmartine, Charles M'Aleſter near Tarbert of Kintire, and Hugh Johnſon in Knapdale. Among the correſpondents who were moſt active and ſucceſsful in procuring me ſeveral pieces from perſons and places that I could have no intercourſe with myſelf, were Meſſrs Alexander M'Nicol in Sococh, Alexander M'Nab near Dalmaly in Glenorchay, and Donald Smith under-ſurgeon in the 42d regiment. I had ſome pieces from the reverend Mr M'Diarmid of Wemyſs, then reſiding in the iſle of Mull, and ſome from a MS. collection belonging to the reverend Mr M'Diarmid in Glaſgow; but have been in a ſpecial manner obliged to Mr Kennedy, ſchoolmaſter in Kilmelford, for the uſe of a large collection, which, with a view of publiſhing, he had gathered with great induſtry through many parts of the Weſt Highlands and Iſles.—Theſe were ſome of the principal ſources from which the following remains of ancient Galic poetry have been derived.

apology, however, be requiſite for theſe freedoms, I can add, that I have been for the moſt part guided in my conjectures, and even ſupplied in my additions, by the traditional tales or *ſgeulachds*, which always accompany and explain the old Galic poems, and which often remain entire, when the poems themſelves are reduced to fragments*. Where theſe tales did not throw ſome ray of light I have been always ſcrupulous to venture far, and have therefore left ſeveral breaches open; conſidering, that when there was no other way of ſupplying them but from fancy, any other perſon had as much right to do that as I had. Sparing, however, as I have been of making any alterations which were not neceſſary, and warranted by ſome of the various readings or by the tales, I am ſenſible the form of the poems is conſiderably altered from what is found in any ſingle one of the editions from which they are compiled. They have aſſumed ſomewhat more of the appearance of regularity and art, than they have in that ſhape in which they are generally to be met with. The reaſon of this, which has juſt now been given,

* The ſtyle of theſe tales is highly figurative and poetical; and the words and ideas ſo well arranged, that they take the moſt laſting hold of the memory and imagination; inſomuch, that they are frequently to be met with where the poems are beginning to be rare.

As the length of ſome of Oſſian's poems has been made an objection to their being preſerved by oral tradition, it muſt appear ſtill more ſtrange, to ſuch as are unacquainted with the contexture of theſe compoſitions, and with the ancient cuſtoms of the Highlanders, that proſaic tales ſhould be preſerved in the ſame manner. Such, however, is the fact. "The extreme length of theſe pieces," ſays Mr Macpherſon, "is very ſurpriſing, ſome of them requiring many days to repeat them. But ſuch hold do they take of the memory, that few circumſtances are ever omitted by thoſe who have received them only from oral tradition: what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, the very language of the bards is ſtill preſerved." Note on Cath-loda, Duan firſt.

Sir W. Temple, who may be leſs ſuſpected of partiality, has long ago given the very ſame account of Iriſh tales. Temple's Miſcel. vol. ii. p. 341.

will, it is hoped, be ſuſtained as ſufficient by ſuch as might perhaps be better pleaſed if they were preſented to them in that bold and irregular manner in which they have been long accuſtomed to hear them. From the long and general ſatisfaction which they have given in that ſhape, it is preſumed that they have in them ſome natural aptneſs to pleaſe the mind of man, and may ſtill afford ſome entertainment to the candid, who have a taſte for ſuch compoſitions, and who look not for that perfection which is ſeldom or never to be found.

MOST of the following poems bear the name of Oſſian; who, for ſome ages back, has engroſſed the merit of almoſt all the ancient Galic poetry, as he had certainly a title to the beſt of it. Some, which bear evidence of their not being his, are remarked as belonging to ſome other poet. Other parts, that ſeemed to me only imitations, I have taken no notice of, as I could not abſolutely venture to reprobate them.

I HAVE inſerted, occaſionally, as many ſpecimens of the original as I could preſume upon, without fear of incurring the cenſure of the bulk of readers, who may not underſtand their beauty, which, often, could not be conveyed into an Engliſh tranſlation. But ſhould it be thought, contrary to what I apprehend, that I have given too few, I ſhall willingly take the firſt opportunity that may offer of producing more of them. As I have made ſo many remarks on theſe poems in the courſe of the notes upon them, it is unneceſſary here to ſay any thing further concerning them. To weigh their merit is not my province, but that of the public, to whoſe judgment I ſubmit them, and in whoſe deciſion I ſhall acquieſce with the moſt reſpectful ſilence.

A

A

COLLECTION

OF

ANCIENT POEMS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE

GALIC.

D A R G O:

A P O E M *.

The ARGUMENT.

Comhal, ſailing to Innisfail, lands on a deſart iſle through night. Here he meets with Dargo, who was ſuppoſed to have been loſt on their return from a former expedition. To comfort Dargo, who had got ſome intimation of the death of his ſpouſe Crimora, Ullin introduces the epiſode of Colda and Minvela. Arriving at Innisfail in the morning, they engage Armor, a chief of Lochlin, who falls in battle.—Crimoina, who had followed Armor in diſguiſe, is diſcovered at night mourning over his grave, and carried to the hall of Innisfail, where Ullin, to divert her grief, relates the ſtory of Morglan and Minona. The next day, Comhal propoſes to ſend her home; but, on her chooſing to live in Morven, ſhe is brought there, and becomes the ſecond wife of Dargo.

Some time after this, Connan, at a hunting party, ſuggeſting ſome doubts of Crimoina's attachment to them, as they were at variance with her people, propoſes to make trial of her love by ſtaining Dargo with the blood of a wild boar which they had killed, and carrying him home as dead. Crimoina was ſo affected with the ſuppoſed death of her huſband, that, after having ſung his elegy to the harp, ſhe ſuddenly expired beſide him.

PART I.

SEE! Dargo reſts beneath his lonely tree, and liſtens to the breeze in its ruſtling leaf. The ghoſt of Crimoina riſes on the blue lake below: the deer ſee it, and ſtalk, without fear, on the

* This poem, which goes under the name of *Dan an Deirg*, has been in ſuch eſtimation as to paſs into a proverb; *Cach dan gu dan an Deirg*.

Perhaps it owes much of the regard paid it, to that tender and plaintive, tho' ſimple, air to which it is ſtill ſung. There are few who have any at all of Oſſian's poems,

the upland rock. No hunter, when the ſign is ſeen, diſturbs their peace; for the ſoul of Dargo is ſad, and the ſwift-bounding companion of his chace howls beſide him.—I alſo feel thy grief at my heart, O Dargo; my tears tremble as dew on the graſs, when I remember thy woful tale.

COMHAL ſat on that rock, where now the deer graze on his tomb. The mark of his bed are three gray ſtones and a leafleſs oak; they are mantled over with the moſs of years. His warriors reſted around the chief. Leaning forward on their ſhields, they liſtened to the voice of the ſong. Their faces are ſidelong turned; and their eyes, at times, are ſhut. The bard praiſed the deeds of the king, when his blaſting ſword and the ſpear of Innisfail † rolled before them, like a wreath of foam, the battle.

THE ſong ceaſed; but its ſound was ſtill in our ear, as the voice

poems, but can repeat, at leaſt, ſome part of Dargo.

As the narration of this poem, however, is put for the moſt part in the mouth of Ullin, and as the tranſactions of it ſuit his time better than Oſſian's, who, if then born, muſt have been very young, we may ſuppoſe *Dan an Deirg* to have been the compoſition of Ullin. Of this hoary and venerable bard, Oſſian always ſpeaks with reverence, and aſcribes to him many epiſodes in his larger poems.

† As the names of Lochlin, Erin, and Innisfail, often occur in this and ſome of the other poems that follow, it may be proper to remember, that by *Lochlin* is meant Norway, or Scandinavia in general; by *Erin*, Ireland; and by *Innisfail*, a part of the ſame country inhabited by the Falans. Sometimes *Innſefail* ſeems to denote ſome of the Hebrides; and *Inniſtore* ſtands always for the Orkneys, or at leaſt the greateſt part of them.---It may be alſo proper to obſerve the footing on which the kings of Morven or Caledonia were with theſe neighbouring countries. With the inhabitants of *Innſefail* and *Inniſtore*, they generally lived on good terms; and ſeem to have been their ſuperiors. With the legal ſovereigns of *Erin* and their people they were nearly allied; and frequently aſſiſted them againſt the uſurpations of the Firbolg, and the incurſions of the Scandinavians. With their ſouthern neighbours, beyond the friths of Forth and Clyde, the kings of Morven ſeem to have had very little friendly intercourſe.

voice of the gale when its courſe is paſt. Our eyes were turned to the ſea. On the diſtant wave aroſe a cloud. We knew the ſkiff of Innisfail. On its maſts we ſaw the Cran-tara * hung. "Spread," ſaid Comhal, "the white wings of my ſails. On the waves we fly to help our friends."

NIGHT met us, with its ſhades, on the deep. Waves lifted before us their white breaſts, and in our ſails was the roar of winds.

"THE night of ſtorms is dark; but a deſart iſle is nigh. It ſpreads its arms like my bow when bent, and its boſom, like the breaſt of my love, is calm. There let us wait the light; it is the place where mariners dream of dangers that are over."

OUR courſe is to the bay of Botha. The bird of night howled above us from its grey rock. A mournful voice welcomed its ſullen note from a cave. "It is the ghoſt of Dargo †," ſaid Comhal; "Dargo, whom we loſt returning from Lochlin's wars."

WAVES lifted their white heads among the clouds. Blue mountains roſe between us and the ſhore. Dargo climbed the maſt to look for Morven; but Morven he ſaw no more. The thong broke in his hand; and the waves, with all their foam, leapt over his red wandering hair. The fury of the blaſt drove our ſails, and we loſt ſight of the chief. We raiſed the ſong of grief in his praiſe,

* The Cran-tara means in general a ſignal of diſtreſs. It was properly a piece of wood half-burnt, and dipt in blood, which was conveyed with all poſſible expedition from one hamlet to another in caſes of imminent danger. The *Cran-tara* ſignifies the "beam of gathering;" and the fire and blood might intimate either the danger apprehended from the invaders, or a threatening to ſuch as did not immediately repair to the chieftain's ſtandard.---The cuſtom ſeems to have been common to other northern nations. See Ol. Mag. p. 146.

† *Dargo*, "red-haired;" *Comhal*, "mild brow."

praiſe, and bade the ghoſts of his fathers convey him to the place of their reſt.

But they heard us not, ſaid Comhal; his ghoſt ſtill haunts theſe dreary rocks. His courſe is not on ſunny hills; on green moſſy vales in Morven. Ye ghoſts of woody Lochlin, who then purſued us in the ſtorm; vain is your attempt, if you think to detain Dargo. Your numbers may be many, but you ſhall not prevail. Trenmor † ſhall come from Morven's clouds, and ſcatter, with his blaſt, your dim forms. Your curling miſts, like the beard of the thiſtle of Ardven, ſhall fly before the ruler of the ſtorm.—And thou, Dargo, ſhalt ride with him, on the ſkirt of his robe, and rejoice with the air-borne ſons of thy people.—Raiſe, Ullin, the ſong, and praiſe his deeds: he will know thy voice, and rejoice in the ſound of his fame. And if any of the ghoſts of Lochlin are near, let them hear of the coming of Trenmor.

Peace to thy ſoul, ſaid Ullin, as he reared his voice; peace to thy ſoul, dweller of the caves of the rock; why ſo long in the land of ſtrangers? Art thou forced to fight the battle of clouds with Lochlin's ghoſts, alone; or do the thouſand thongs of air confine thee? Often, O Dargo, didſt thou contend with a whole hoſt; and, ſtill, thy ghoſt maintains the unequal combat. But Trenmor ſhall ſoon come, and lift the broad ſhield and airy blade in thine aid. He will purſue the troubled ghoſts of Lochlin before him, like the withered leaf of Malmor's oak, when it is caught in the folds of the whirlwind.—Peace to thy ſoul, till then,

† *Trenmor*, "tall and mighty;" the great-grandfather of Fingal.

then, O Dargo: and calm be thy reſt, thou dweller of the rock, in the land of ſtrangers.

And doſt thou bid me remain on this rock, bard of Comhal; will the warriors of Morven forſake their friend in the hour of danger? cried Dargo, as he deſcended from the ſteep of his cliff.

Galchos knew the voice of Dargo, and made the glad reply he was wont when called to the chace; the chace of the dun-bounding ſons of the deſart. Quick, as an arrow in air, he ſprings over waves. His feet are ſcarce bathed in the deep. He leaps to the breaſt of Dargo.—The dim-twinkling ſtars looked, through the parted clouds, on their meeting of joy. It was like the embrace of friends, when they meet in the land of ſtrangers, after the ſlow years of abſence.

How, ſaid Comhal, is Dargo alive! How didſt thou eſcape ocean's floods, when they rolled their billows over thy head, and hid thee in their foam?

The waves, ſaid Dargo, drove me to this rock, after toiling a whole night in the ſtream. Seven times, ſince, has the moon waſted its light and grown again: but ſeven years are not ſo long on the brown heath of Morven. All the day I ſat on that rock, humming the ſongs of our bards; while I liſtened to the hoarſe ſound of the waves, or the hoarſer ſcreams of the fowls that rode on their top. And, in the night, I converſed with the ghoſts and the owl; or ſtole on the ſea-fowl that ſlept on the beachy rock.—Long, Comhal, was the time; for ſlow are the ſteps of the ſun, and ſcarce-moving is the moon that ſhines on this lonely place.—But why theſe ſilent tears, what mean theſe pitying looks? They are not for my tale of wo; they are for Crimora's death. I know

ſhe is not: for I ſaw her ghoſt, ſailing on the low-ſkirted miſt, that hung on the beams of the moon; when they glittered, through the thin ſhower, on the ſmooth face of the deep. I ſaw my love, but her face was pale. The briny drops were trickling down her yellow locks, as if from ocean's boſom ſhe had roſe. The dark courſe of the tears was on her cheek, like the marks of ſtreams of old, when their floods overflowed the vale. I knew the form of Crimora. I gueſſed the fate of my love. I raiſed my voice, and invited her to my lonely rock. But the virgin-ghoſts of Morven raiſed the faint ſong around the maid. It was like the dying fall of the breeze in the evening of autumn; when ſhadows ſlowly grow in Cona's vale, and ſoft ſounds travel, through ſecret ſtreams, in the gale of reeds. The liſtening waves, bending forward, ſtood ſtill, and the ſcreaming ſea-fowl were quiet, while the tender air continued.

"COME," they ſaid, "Crimora *, to Morven; come to the hills of woods; where Sulmalda, the beauteous love of Trenmor, bends the airy bow, and purſues the half-viewleſs deer of the clouds. Come, Crimora, and forget thy grief in the land of our joy."

SHE followed; but left me a pitying look, and I thought I heard her ſigh. It was like the diſtant wave on the lonely ſhore, when the mariner hears its moan from the mouth of his cave, and fears the coming ſtorm. Still I liſtened; but the ſoft muſic ceaſed: the fair viſion vaniſhed. It vaniſhed like the hunter's dream of love, when the ſound of the horn, on the heath, awakes him. I cried; but they heard me not. They left me to mourn on my ſolitary rock; like the dove which his mate hath forſaken.—Since that time,

* *Cri'mora*, "large, or generous heart." *Sul-malda*, "mild-looking eye."

time, my tears have always begun with the dawn of the morning, and deſcended with the ſhades of the night.—O when ſhall I ſee thee again, Crimora! Tell me, Comhal, how died my love.

Thy love heard of thy fate, and three ſuns beheld her white hand ſupport her bending head. The fourth ſaw her ſteps on the winding ſhore, looking for the cold corſe of Dargo. The daughters of Morven beheld her from their mountains. They deſcended, in ſilence, along their blue ſtreams. Their ſighs lift their wandering hair, their ſoft hands wipe away the dimming tear.—They came, in ſilence, to comfort Crimora; but in her bed of ooze, they found the maid. They found her cold as a wreath of ſnow; fair as a ſwan on the ſhore of Lano.—The gray ſtone and green turf on Morven's ſhore, now compoſe Crimora's dwelling.—The daughters of Morven mourned her fate, and the bards praiſed her beauty.—So may we, Dargo, live in renown; ſo may our fame be found, when we moulder in the narrow houſe!

—But ſee that light of Innisfail; ſee the Crantara fly? Danger is nigh the king. Spread the ſail, and ply the oar; ſwift fly the bark over the ſea. Let our ſpeed be to yonder ſhore, that we may ſcatter the foes of Innisfail.

The breeze of Morven comes to our aid. It fills the wide womb of our ſails with its breath. Our mariners riſe on their oars, and laſh the foaming waves on their gray-bending head. Each hero looks forward to the ſhore! each ſoul is already in the field.—But the eye of Dargo is bent downwards, as he ſits in the ſilence of his grief. His head reſts on his arm, over the dark edge of his father's ſhield. Comhal obſerves the mournful chief; he obſerves his tears, dim-wandering, through the boſſy plain of his

ſhield; and he turns his eye on Ullin, that he may gladden his ſoul with the ſong.

" COLDA † lived in the days of Trenmor. He purſued the deer round Etha's bay. The woody banks echoed to his cry, and the branchy ſons of the mountain fell. Minvela ſaw him from the other ſide. She would croſs the bay in her bounding ſkiff. A blaſt from the land of the ſtrangers came. It turned the boat on the ſtormy deep. Minvela roſe on its back. Colda heard her cries. —' I die,' ſhe ſaid, ' Colda! my Colda, help me!'

" NIGHT drew its mantle over the wave. Fainter her voice ſounded in his ear; fainter it echoed from the ſhelving banks. Like the diſtant ſound of evening ſtreams, it died at length away, and ſunk in night.—With morning he found her on the ſounding beach. Her blood was mixt with the oozy foam.—He raiſed her gray ſtone on the ſhore, nigh a ſpreading oak and murmuring brook. The hunter knows the place, and often reſts in the ſhade when the beams of the ſun ſcorch the plain with the noon-day heat.

† The epiſode of Colda is often repeated by itſelf, but the circumſtances of the poem leave no room to doubt of its proper place being here. As it is beautiful, and not long, I take the liberty of inſerting it for the ſake of the Galic reader.

Ri linn Threinmhoir nan ſgia'
Ruaig Caoilte am fia' mu Eite;
Thuit leis daimh chabrach nan cnoc,
'Scho-fhreagair gach ſlochd da eighe.
Chunnaic Min-bheul a gaol,
'S le curach faoin chaidh na dhail.
Sheid oſna choimheach gun bhaigh,
'S chuir i druim an aird air a barca.
Chualas le Caoilte a glaodh
'Y A Ghaoil, a Ghaoil, dean mo cho'nadh."

Ach thuirling dall-bhrat na h oidhche
'S dh'fhailnich a caoi-chora'.
Mar fhuaim ſruthain ann cein,
Rainig a h eigh ga chluaſan,
'S air madain ann on'adh na tragha
Fhuaras gun chail an og-bhean.
Thog e'n 'n cois tragha a leachd
Aig ſruthan broin nan glas-gheugan;
'S iul don t Sealgair an t alte,
Smor a bhaigh ris ann teas na greine.
'S bu chian do Chaoilte ri bron
Feadh an lo, ann coillteach Eite,
'S fad na h oidhche chluinnte a leon;
Chuireadh e air coin an uiſge deiſinn.
Ach bhuail Trenmor beum-ſgeithe,
'S da ionſuidh, le buaidh, leum Caoilte;
Uigh air uigh phill a ghean,
Chual e chliu, 's lean e'n t ſolge.

heat.—Colda long was ſad. All day, through Etha's woody banks, he ſtrayed alone. All night the liſtening ſea-fowl, with his moan on the ſhore, were ſad.—But the foe came, and the ſhield of Trenmor was ſtruck. Colda lifted the ſpear, and they were vanquiſhed. His joy, by degrees, returned; like the ſun, when the ſtorm on the heath is paſt. He purſued again the brown deer of Etha, and heard his fame in the ſong of the bards."

I REMEMBER, ſaid Dargo, the chief. Like the faint traces of a dream that is long ſince paſt, his memory travels acroſs my ſoul. Often he led my infant ſteps to the ſtone on the banks of Etha. The tear, as he leaned on its gray moſs, would fall from his griefred eye: he would wipe it away with his ſnowy locks. When I would aſk him why he wept?—"Yes," he would reply, "it is here Minvela ſleeps." And when I would bid him cut me a bow; "It is," he would ſay, "the tomb of my love indeed. O let it be thy haunt, when thou ſhalt hereafter purſue the chace, and reſt at noon till the warm beam is over!"—And often I did ſit, O Colda, over her tomb and thine, while I gave thy fame to the mournful ſong. O that my renown, like thine, might ſurvive, when I myſelf am high, on theſe clouds, with Crimora!

AND thy fame ſhall remain, ſaid Comhal.—But ſee theſe ſhields, rolling like moons in miſt. Their boſſes glitter to the firſt gray beams of the morning. The people of Lochlin are there; and the walls of Innisfail tremble before them. The king looks out at his window; and, through the dimneſs of his tears, beholds a gray cloud. Two drops fall on the ſtone on which he leans; he perceives that our ſails are the gray cloud. The tear of joy ſtarts into his eye, "Comhal, he cries, is near!"

LOCH-

LOCHLIN too hath ſeen us, and bends his gathered hoſt to meet us. Armor leads them on, tall above the reſt, as the red ſtag that heads the herd of Morven. Againſt me he lifts that hand, from which I looſed the thongs on the ſhore of Erin. Let each, my friends, gird on his ſword, and bound aſhore on his ſpear. Let each remember the deeds of his former days, and the battles of Morven's heroes.—Dargo, ſpread thy broad ſhield: Carril, wave thy ſword of light: Connal, ſhake thy ſpear, that often ſtrewed the plain with dead: And, Ullin, raiſe thou the ſong, to ſpirit us on to battle *.

WE met the foe. But they ſtood, firm, as the oak of Malmor, that does not bend before the fury of the ſtorm. Innisfail ſaw, and ruſhed from their walls to help us. Lochlin was then blaſted before us, and its dry branches ſtrewed in the courſe of the tempeſt. Armor met the chief of Innisfail; but the ſpear of the king fixed his thick ſhield to his breaſt. Lochlin, Morven, and Innisfail wept for the early fall of the chief; and his bard began the mournful ſong in his praiſe.

" Tall wert thou, Armor, as the oak on the plain: ſwift as the eagle's wing was thy ſpeed; ſtrong, as the blaſt of Loda, thy arm; and deadly, as Lego's miſt †, thy blade! Early art thou gone to the airy hall: why, thou mighty, art thou fallen in youth? Who ſhall

* To ſing the *Broſnacha-catha*, or "the incitement to war," was part of the office of the bards.

† The lake of Lego in Ireland, and the lake of Lano in Scandinavia, have the ſame noxious quality aſcribed to their vapours by the ancient bards. In this ſimile, ſome repeat the one, and ſome the other. Lano, in the mouth of a Scandinavian bard, might be more proper; but Lego ſeems to ſuit better with the verſe, and makes the ſound ſmoother.

Bha t airde mar dharaig 'sa ghleann.
Do lua's mar iolair nam beann gun gheilt;
Do ſpionna mar ofna' Lodda na fheirg,
'S do lann, mar cheo *Leige*, gun leigheas.

† The

ſhall tell thy aged father, that he has now no ſon; or who ſhall tell Crimoina that her love is dead?—I ſee thy father, bending beneath the load of years. His hand trembles on the pointleſs ſpear; and his head, with its few gray hairs, ſhakes like the aſpen leaf. Every diſtant cloud deceives his dim eye, as he looks, in vain, for thy bounding ſhip. Joy, like a ſun-beam on the blaſted heath, travels over his face of age, as he cries to the children at their play, 'I behold it coming.' They turn their eye on the blue wave, and tell him they ſee but the ſailing miſt. He ſhakes, with a ſigh, his gray head, and the cloud of his face is mournful.—I ſee Crimoina ſmiling in her morning dream. She thinks thou doſt arrive in all thy ſtately beauty. Her lips, in half-formed words, hail thee in her dream, and her joyful arms are ſpread to claſp thee.—But, alas! Crimoina, thou only dreameſt. Thy love is fallen. Never more ſhall he tread the ſhore of his native land. In the duſt of Innisfail his beauty ſleeps! Thou ſhalt awake from thy ſlumber to know it, Crimoina; but when ſhall Armor awake from his long ſleep? When ſhall the heavy ſlumber of the tenant of the tomb be ended? When ſhall the ſound of the horn awake him to the chace? When ſhall the noiſe of the ſhield awake him to the battle?—Children of the chace, Armor is aſleep, wait not for his riſing; for the voice of the morning ſhall never reach his dwelling: ſons of the ſpear, the battle muſt be fought without him; for he is aſleep, and no warning boſs ſhall awake him.—Tall wert thou †, Armor, as the oak

† The ancient bards frequently conclude their epiſodes with a repetition of the firſt ſtanza. Inſtead of this, however, many repeat here the following verſes:

Beannachd air anam an laoich
Bu gharg fraoch ri dol 's gach greis,
Ard Ri' Lo'icann, ceann an t ſluaigh,
'S iomad ruaig a chuire' leis.

"Peace to the ſoul of the hero whoſe wrath

oak on the plain. Swift as the eagle's wing was thy ſpeed: ſtrong, as the blaſt of Loda *, thy arm; and deadly, as Lego's miſt, thy blade."

THE bard ceaſed. The tomb of Armor was reared; and his people, with ſlow unequal ſteps, departed. Their nodding maſts are heavy on the deep. Their ſongs are heard, at times; but their ſound is mournful. They are like the ſigh of mountain-winds in the waving graſs of the tomb, when the night is dark and the vales are ſilent.

PART II.

THE tales of the years that are paſt, are beams of light to the ſoul of the bard. They are like ſun-beams that travel over the heath of Morven; joy is in their courſe, though darkneſs dwells around.—Joy is in their courſe, but it is ſoon paſt; and the path of darkneſs, like the ſhadow of miſt, purſues them. It will ſoon overtake them on the mountains, and the footſteps of the glad beams will ceaſe to be ſeen. Thus the tale of Dargo travels over my ſoul, a beam of light, though the gathering of clouds is nigh it. —Shine on, O beam, as thou didſt in the ſtrife of Armor, when the ſtrength

wrath in the ſtrife of war was deadly. Peace to the people's chief, and to Lochlin's king; often did the vanquiſhed fly before him."

* The Loda, or Lodda, of Oſſian, is ſuppoſed to have been the ſame with the Odin or Woden of the Scandinavians. This hero was more ancient than Homer; as his ſon Skiold was, according to the Daniſh chronologies, a thouſand years older than Pompey. His many conqueſts and warlike exploits ſeem to have procured him divine honours from his countrymen, after his death.

ſtrength of the bard was great, and his ſoul ſwelled, like Fingal's ſail, in the ſtorm of danger.

We * turned in, that night, to the gray tower of Innisfail, and rejoiced in the ſong and the ſhell. The burſt of grief, at times, reaches our ears. " Ullin and Sulma, examine whence it comes."

We find Crimoina ſtretched on the grave of Armor.—When the battle had ceaſed, and her lover had fallen, ſhe too had ſunk in her ſecret place. All day, beneath the ſhade of a young oak ſhe lay. At night, ſhe made her bed on the grave of her love.—We gently tore her from her place, as our tears deſcended in ſilence. The grief of the virgin was great, and our words were uttered only in ſighs.

We brought her to the halls of Innisfail; and ſorrow came, like a cloud, on every face. Ullin, at length, took the harp, and bade it give its tendereſt air. Slow, ſolemn, and ſoft, his fingers ſteal along the trembling ſtrings. The ſound melts the ſoul. It calms the tumult of wo in the breaſt.

† " Who bends, he ſaid, from his airy cloud! who pours the

T piteous

* Upon the authority of the tale, a ſentence or two are here thrown in to conduct the narration, as the verſe is deficient.

† The ſmooth and elegiac ſtrain of this epiſode, when ſet off with all the charms of muſic, could not fail to affect every perſon poſſeſſed of any ſenſibility of heart. For the ſake of thoſe who may underſtand the original, it is here ſubjoined.

Co ſo tuirling on cheo!
Sa dortadh a leoin air a ghaoith?
O's domhain a chreuchd tha na chliabh;
'Sis doilleir am fiadh ud ra thaobh!
Sud taibhſe Mhorghlain na mais'
Triath Sli'-ghlais nan ioma' ſruth;
Thainig e gu Morbheinn le ghael
Inghean Shora bu chaoine cruth.
Thog eiſin r'ar n aonach gun bhaigh.
Mio'onn dh'fhag e na tigh.
Thnirling dall-cheo le oidhche na nial.
Dh'eigh na ſruthaibh;---ſhian na taibhſe.
Thug an og-bhean ſuil ris an t ſliabh,
S chunnacas le'a fiadh ro'n cheo:
Tharruing i'n t ſreang le rogha beachd:
Fhuaras an gath ann uchd an oig!
Thiolaic ſion 'san tulaich an laoch,
Le gath is cuibhne na chaol-tigh.
B'aill le Min'onn luidh fa' ſhoid;

Ach

piteous ſigh on the wind! The dark wound is ſtill in his breaſt, and the half-viewleſs deer is beſide him? Who is it but the ghoſt of the faireſt Morglan, king of the ſtreamy Sliglas?—He came with the foe of Morven, and purſued the deer of our land. His love was with him; the fair-haired, white-handed, daughter of Sora. Morglan had gone to the hill: Minona ſtaid in the booth. The thick miſt deſcends. Night comes on, with all its clouds. The torrent roars in its fall. Ghoſts ſhriek along its hollow-ſounding courſe. Minona looks for her love. She half-eſpies a deer, ſlow-moving in the mountain miſt. Her hand of ſnow is on the bow. She draws the ſtring. The arrow flies. Oh! that it had erred farther from the mark. The deer is borne by her Morglan. The arrow is found in his youthful breaſt!

"We reared the hero's tomb on the hill, and placed the arrow and the horn of the deer in his darkly ſilent houſe. There, too, his bounding dog was laid, to purſue the airy deer.—Minona would ſleep with her love. But we ſent her home to her land; where ſhe, long, was ſad. But her grief waſted away with the ſtream of years; and ſhe now rejoices with Sora's maids, though, at times, her ſighs are heard.—Who bends from his airy cloud? who pours his ſigh on the wind? The dark wound is ſtill in his breaſt, and the half-viewleſs deer is beſide him."

Day came to Innisfail, with its gray-dark light. Take, Ullin, thy ſhip, ſaid Comhal, and bring Crimoina to her land; that, in the midſt of her friends, ſhe may again rejoice, like the moon when

Ach phill i, le bron, da tir.
Bu trom a tuirſe, 's bu chian:
Ach ſiuth bhliadnuidh chaith air falbh e.

Tha i 'nois ſubhach le oigh'ean Shora,
Mur cluinntear a bron air uairibh.—
Co ſo tuirling, &c.

when it lifts its head through clouds and ſmiles on the valley of ſilence.

Blessed, ſaid Crimoina, be the chief of Morven, the friend of the feeble in the day of their danger!—But what ſhould Crimoina do in her land; where every rock and hill, every tree and murmuring brook, would awake her ſlumbering ſorrow? The youths whom I ſcorned, when they would behold me, would laugh, and ſay, Where is now thy Armor? You may ſay it, but I will not hear you; I live in a land that is diſtant. I end my ſhort day with the maids of Morven. Their hearts, like that of their king, will feel for the unhappy.

We brought Crimoina with us to our land. We gave her fair hand to Dargo. But ſtill, at times, ſhe was ſad; the ſecret ſtreams, as they paſſed, heard on their banks her ſigh.—Crimoina, thy day, indeed, was ſhort. The ſtrings of the harp are wet, while the bard repeats thy tale.

One day as we purſued the deer on Morven's darkly heath, the ſhips of Lochlin appeared on our ſeas, with all their white ſails, and nodding maſts. We thought it might be to demand Crimoina. "I will not fight," ſaid Connas of the little ſoul, "till I firſt know if that ſtranger loves our race. Let us purſue the boar, and dye the robe of Dargo with his blood. Then let us carry the body of her huſband home, and ſee how ſhe will mourn for his loſs."

We heard, in an evil hour, the advice of Connas. We purſued the foaming boar. We brought him low in the echoing woods. Two held him in all his foam, while Connas pierced him through with the ſpear.

Dargo lay down, and we ſprinkled him over with the blood.

We bore him on our ſpears to Crimoina; and ſung, as we went along, the ſong of death. Connas ran before us with the ſkin of the boar. I ſlew him, he ſaid, with my ſteel; but firſt his deadly tuſk had pierced thy Dargo. For the ſpear of the chief was broke, and the looſe rock had failed below him.

CRIMOINA heard the tale of the tomb. She ſaw her Dargo brought home, as dead. Silent and pale ſhe ſtood, as the pillar of ice that hangs, in the ſeaſon of cold, from the brow of Mora's rock. At length ſhe took her harp, and touched it, ſoft, in praiſe of her love. Dargo would riſe, but we forbade till the ſong ſhould ceaſe; for it was ſweet as the voice of the wounded ſwan, when ſhe ſings away her ſoul in death, and feels in her breaſt the fatal dart of the hunter *. Her companions flock, mournful, around; they

* This ſimile is differently expreſſed; being ſometimes derived from the *ſwan*, (Mar bhinn-ghuth *caluidh* 'n guin bais), and ſometimes from the *minſtrel*, which is expreſſed by a word of nearly the ſame ſound, (mar bhinn-ghuth *filuidh*, &c.) with a ſlight variation in the reſt of the ſtanza.---Which of the words was originally uſed by Ullin, is uncertain; but the firſt is here retained as the moſt beautiful, though perhaps the moſt exceptionable, reading. The ſinging of the ſwan has been always conſidered as a dream of the Greek and Latin poets: and though the Celtic may need no defence, as his expreſſion is ſo dubious and ſo differently repeated; yet, in ſupport of them, I muſt obſerve, that it is univerſally affirmed in the weſt of Scotland, as an undoubted fact, that the wild ſwans which frequent theſe parts in winter, and which are ſpecifically different from the tame, emit ſome very melodious notes on certain occaſions; particularly when two flocks of them meet, when they are wounded, and when about to take their flight, being birds of paſſage in theſe countries. Their note has, in the Galic, a particular name, which would not readily be the caſe if the thing had not a foundation in nature: and there is likewiſe a tune or ſong called *Luineag na h Ealui*, "the ſwan's ditty," the words and air of which are in imitation of this bird's ſinging. A part of this *Luineag* is here ſubjoined.

Gui' eug- i, Gui'eug-o
Sgeula mo dhunach
Gui'eug-i
Rinn mo leire'
Gui'eug-o
Mo chaſan dubh
Gui'eug-i
'Smi fein gle' gheal
Gui'eug-o.

they aſſuage her pain with their ſong, and bid the ghoſts of ſwans convey her ſoul to the airy lake of the clouds. Its place is above the mountains of Morven.

" BEND," ſhe ſaid, " from your clouds, ye fathers of Dargo; bend, and carry him to the place of your reſt. And ye maids of Trenmor's airy land, prepare the bright robe of miſt for my love. O Dargo, why have I loved, why was I beloved ſo much! Our ſouls were one; our hearts grew together, and how can I ſurvive when they are now divided?—We were two flowers that grew in the cleft of the rock; and our dewy heads, amidſt ſun-beams, ſmiled. The flowers were two; but their root was one. The virgins of Cona ſaw them, and turned away their foot; ' They are lonely,' they ſaid, ' but lovely.' The deer, in his courſe, leaped over them; and the roe forbore to crop them. But the wild boar, relentleſs, came. He tore up the one with his deadly tuſk. The other bends over it his drooping head; and the beauty of both, like the dry herb before the ſun, is decayed.

" MY ſun on Morven now is ſet, and the darkneſs of death dwells around me. My ſun ſhone, how bright! in the morning; its beams it ſhed around me, in all its ſmiling beauty. But ere evening it is ſet, to riſe no more; and leaves me in one cold, eternal, night. Alas, my Dargo! Why art thou ſo ſoon ſet? Why is thy late-ſmiling face o'ercaſt with ſo thick a cloud? Why is thy warm heart ſo ſoon grown cold, and thy tongue of muſic grown ſo mute!—Thy hand, which ſo lately ſhook the ſpear in the battle's front, there lies cold and ſtiff: and thy foot, this morning the foremoſt in the fatal chace, there lies, dead as the earth it trod. From afar, o'er ſeas, and hills, and dales, have I followed till this day, my love! thy

thy ſteps.—In vain did my father look for my return; in vain did my mother mourn my abſence. Their eye was often on the ſea; the rocks often heard their cry. But I have been deaf, O my parents, to your voice; for my thoughts were fixed on Dargo.—O that death would repeat on me his ſtroke! O that the wild boar had alſo torn Crimoina's breaſt! Then ſhould I mourn on Morven no more, but joyfully go with my love on his cloud!—Laſt night, I ſlept on the heath by thy ſide; is there not room, this night, in thy ſhroud? Yes, beſide thee I will lay me down: with thee, this night too, I will ſleep, my love, my Dargo *!"

We heard the faultering of her voice: we heard the faint note dying in her hand. We raiſed Dargo from his place. But it was too late. Crimoina was no more. The harp dropped from her hand. Her ſoul ſhe breathed out in the ſong. She fell beſide her Dargo.

He raiſed her tomb, with Crimora, on the ſhore; and hath prepared the gray ſtones for his own in the ſame place.

Since then, twice ten ſummers have gladdened the plains; and twice ten winters have covered with ſnow the woods. In all that time, the man of grief hath lived in his cave, alone; and liſtens only to the ſong that is ſad. Often I ſing to him in the calm of noon, when Crimoina bends down from her ſlakey miſt.

* A ſtanza or two more, which are ſometimes added to this lament of Crimoina, are omitted; as there is here, eſpecially in the original, a kind of pauſe, which ſeems to have been intended for the concluſion.

'S rinneadh leaba dhuinn an raoir,
Air an raon ud chnoc nan ſealg;
'S ni'n deantar leab' air leth a noehd dhuinn,
S' ni'n ſgarar mo chorp o'm Dhearg.——

GAUL:

G A U L*:

A P O E M.

The ARGUMENT.

Ossian, having retired, through night, to the ruins of Fingal's palace, to lament there his reverſe of fortune, lights upon a piece of an old ſhield, which he recognizes to be that of Gaul, the ſon of Morni.---This circumſtance introduces the hiſtory of an expedition of Fingal to Iſrona, whither Gaul had followed him, but did not arrive there till Fingal had departed. Gaul, after a brave reſiſtance, is at length overpowered by numbers, and left upon the ſhore dangerouſly wounded. Here his ſpouſe Evirchoma (whoſe anxiety had led her to come with her child to meet him) finds him, and attempts to carry him home. But the wind proving contrary, and Gaul dying of his wounds, ſhe is ſo overcome with toil and grief, that ſhe is obliged to deſiſt, and ſtop in the ſhelter of a ſmall iſle, where Oſſian, who had gone in queſt of her and Gaul, finds both expiring. He carries them to Strumon; the deſolate appearance of which is deſcribed, with the lamentation of Fingal over Gaul, who had been one of his chief heroes.---This poem is addreſſed to Malvina, the daughter of Toſcar.

AWFUL is the ſilence of night. It ſpreads its mantle over the vale. The hunter ſleeps on the heath. His gray dog ſtretches his neck over his knee. In his dreams he purſues the ſons of the mountain, and with joy he half-awakes.

Sleep

* Gaul the ſon of Morni was a diſtinguiſhed character in the wars of Fingal, and conſequently in the poems of Oſſian. This piece, which celebrates his memory, is in the original called *Tiomna 'Ghuill.* It is ſtill pretty well known; but the moſt common editions of it are a good deal adulterated by the interpolations of the *Ur-ſgeuls*, or "later tales." It begins in this manner:

Nach tiamhaidh toſd ſo na h oidhche,
Si taoſgadh a dui'ncoil air gleanntaidh!
Dh'aom ſuain air iuran na ſeilge
Air an raon, ſa chu ra ghlun.
Clanna nan ſliabh tha e 'ruaga'
Na aiſling, 'ſa ſhuain ga threigſin.

SLEEP on, and take thy reſt, light-bounding ſon of the chace; Oſſian will not diſturb thee. Sleep on, ye ſons of toil; the ſtars are but running their mid-way courſe, and Oſſian alone is awake on the hills. I love to wander alone, when all is dark and quiet. The gloom of night accords with the ſadneſs of my ſoul; nor can the morning ſun, with all his beams, bring day to me.

SPARE thy beams then, O ſun! like the king of Morven, thou art too laviſh of thy bounty. Doſt thou not know thy light, like his, may one day fail. Spare thy lamps which thou kindleſt, by thouſands, in thy blue hall above; when thou thyſelf retireſt to thy repoſe, below the duſky gates of the weſt. Why ſhould thy lights fail, and leave thee in thy mournful halls, alone, as his friends have done to Oſſian? Why, mighty beam, ſhouldſt thou waſte them on Morven; when the heroes have ceaſed to behold them; when there is no eye to admire their green-ſparkling beauty?

MORVEN, how have thy lights failed! Like the beam of the oak in thy palaces, they have decayed, and their place is the dwelling of darkneſs. Thy palaces themſelves, like thoſe who rejoiced within them, are fallen on the heath, and the thick ſhadow of death ſurrounds them. Temora is fallen; Tura is an heap; and Selma is ſilent. The ſound of their ſhells is long ſince paſt. The ſong of their bards and the voice of their harps are over. A green mound of earth, a moſs-clad ſtone lifting through it here and there its gray head, is all that preſerves their memory. The mariner beholds, no more, their tall heads riſing through clouds, as he bounds on the deep; nor the traveller as he comes from the deſart.

I GROPE for Selma. I ſtumble on a ruin. Without any form

is

is the heap. The heath and the rank graſs grow about its ſtones; and the lonely thiſtle ſhakes here, in the midnight breeze, its head. I feel it heavy with the drops of night.—The owl flutters around my gray hairs: ſhe awakes the roe from his bed of moſs. He bounds lightly, without fear; for he ſees it is but the aged Oſſian. —Roe of moſſy Selma, thy death is not in the thought of the bard. Thou haſt ſtarted from the bed where often ſlept Fingal and Oſcar, and doſt thou think Oſſian will ſtain it with his ſpear? No; roe of the bed of Fingal and Oſcar, thy death is not in the thought of the bard.—I only ſtretch my hand to the place where hung my father's ſhield; where it hung, on high, from the roof of Selma. But the blue bending ſhell of heaven, O Selma! is now thy only covering. I ſeek the broad ſhield among the ruins: my ſpear ſtrikes againſt one of its broken boſſes.—It is the boſs in which dwelt the voice of war! Its ſound is ſtill pleaſant to my ear: it awakes the memory of the days that are paſt; as when the breath of winds kindles the decaying flame on the heath of hinds. —I feel the heaving of my ſoul. It grows like the ſwelling of a flood; but the burden of age preſſes it back: retire, ye thoughts of war!—Ye dark-brown years that are paſt, retire. Retire with your clanging ſhields, and let the ſoul of the aged reſt. Why ſhould war dwell, any more, in my thoughts, when I have forgot to lift the ſpear? Yes, the ſpear of Temora is now a ſtaff; never more ſhall it ſtrike the ſounding ſhield.—But it does ſtrike againſt a ſhield: let me feel its ſhape.—It is like the waſting moon, half-conſumed with the ruſt of years.—It was thy blue ſhield, O Gaul!—the ſhield of the companion of my Oſcar!— But why this melting of my ſoul?—Son of my love! thou haſt

received thy fame. I will retire and give the name of Gaul to the ſong.—Harp of Selma, where art thou? And where art thou, Malvina? Thou wilt hear with joy of the companion * of thy Oſcar.

THE night was ſtormy and dark; ghoſts ſhrieked on the heath: torrents roared from the rock of the hill: thunders rolled, like breaking rocks, through clouds; and lightnings travelled on their dark-red wings through the ſky.—On that night, our heroes gathered in Selma's halls; the halls that are now an heap! the oak blazed in the midſt. Their faces ſhone in its light, joyful between their dark locks; and the ſhell went round, with its ſparkling joy †. The bards ſung, and the ſoft hand of virgins trembled on the ſtring of the harp.

THE night flew on the wings of gladneſs. We thought the ſtars had ſcarce meaſured half their way, when gray morning aroſe, from the troubled clouds of her repoſe in the eaſt. The ſhield of Fingal

* The diſparity of age between Gaul and Oſcar was conſiderable. Yet the ſimilarity of their characters might naturally attach them to each other. The original word, however, which is rendered *companion*, is obſolete, and may only import that they went *hand in hand* to battle. I inſert ſo much of the paſſage as may enable thoſe who underſtand the langage to judge of the meaning of the expreſſion.

Sa choppain eigheach nam blar!
Is far-aoibhin leam fathaſd t ſhuaim;
Tha e duſga' nan laidh chuaidh ſcach:
'Sa dh'aindeoin aois, tha manam a 'leimnich.
——Ach uam ſmuainte nam blar,
'S mo ſhleagh air fas na luirg;
An ſgia' choppach tuille cha bhuail i;
Ach ciod ſo'n ſhuaim a dhuiſg i?
Bloidh ſgeith air a caithe le haois!
Mar ghealach ear-dhu' a cruth.
Sgia Ghuill ſi a t'ann
Sgia *cho'lain* mo dheagh Oſcair!

† There are ſeveral opinions with regard to the liquor uſed in theſe *feaſts of ſoells*. The moſt probable is, that it was made of a juice extracted from the birch-tree, and fermented. This would be more palatable than that which it is ſaid they made of a certain kind of heath, and more ſuited to their exigencies than any ſpoils of wine which they might, at times, carry away from the Roman province. Or they migbt poſſibly have malt-liquors from other parts of the iſland before they themſelves paid any attention to agriculture.

gal was ſtruck. This boſs ‡ had then another ſound. The heroes heard its voice, like thunder on the diſtant heath; and they ruſhed with joy from all their ſtreams. Gaul heard it; but the water of Strumon rolled its flood, and who could croſs its mighty tide?

We ſailed to Ifrona: we fought; and recovered the ſpoil of our land. Why didſt thou not wait at thy moſſy ſtream till we returned, thou lifter of the blue ſhield! Why, ſon of Morni, was thy ſoul ſo impatient for the battle?—But thou wouldſt not loſe thy ſhare in any field of fame. Gaul prepared his ſhip, light rider of the foamy wave, and ſpread his ſails to the firſt ray that ſtreaked the clouds of the eaſt. He followed to Ifrona the path of the king.

But who is that on the ſea-beat rock, ſad as the gray miſt of the morning? Her dark hair floats, careleſs, on the ſtream of winds; her white hand is around it, like the foam of floods. Two dewy drops ſtart into her eyes as they are fixed on the ſhip of Gaul; and on her breaſt hangs, in the midſt of his ſmiles, her child. She hums in his ear a ſong. Sighing, ſhe ſtops ſhort. She has forgot what it was. Thy thoughts, Evirchoma, are not of the ſong: they ſail, along with thy love, on the deep. The leſſened ſhip is half in view. A low-ſailing cloud now ſpreads its ſkirt between, and hides it like a dark rock in the paſſing miſt. "Safe be thy courſe, rider of the foamy deep; when, my love, ſhall I again behold thee!"

‡ The boſs of Fingal's ſhield, found juſt now in the ruins of his palace. The *Beim-ſgeithe*, or "ſtriking the ſhield," was the uſual mode of giving the alarm or challenge to battle among the Caledonians.

Evirchoma * returns to Strumon's halls; but her ſteps are ſlow, and her face is ſad. She is like a lonely ghoſt in a calm, when he walks in the miſt of the pool, and the wind of hills is ſilent. Often ſhe looks back, in the midſt of her ſighs, and turns her tearful eye towards Ocean. "Safe be thy courſe, rider of the foamy deep; when ſhall I again behold thee!"

NIGHT with all her murky darkneſs met the ſon of Morni in the midſt of his courſe. The dim moon hid herſelf in the caves of clouds, and no ſtar looked out from the windows of the ſky. His bark in ſilence rides the deep: and, in our courſe, we miſs the chief, as homeward we bound to Morven.

IFRONA hides itſelf in the morning miſt. The ſtep of Gaul is careleſs on its ſhore: he wonders he does not hear the roar of battle. He ſtrikes his ſhield, that his friends may know of his coming. "Does Fingal," he ſays, "ſleep; and the battle unfought? Heroes of Morven, are you here?"

O THAT we had! Then had this ſpear defended thee from the foe; or low had its owner fallen. No harmleſs ſtaff, the prop of tottering years, was then Temora's ſpear. It was the lightning that overturns the lofty trees in its red-winged courſe, when the mountains tremble before it. Oſſian was then no blaſted tree that ſtands alone on the heath, ſhaking before every breeze, and half-bent over the ſtream by wintry ſtorms. No; I ſtood like the pine of Cona, with all my green branches about me, ſmiling at the ſtorm of heaven, and toſſing themſelves with joy in the roar of winds.

* *Acibhir-chaomha*, "mild and ſtately," the wife of Gaul, and daughter of *Caſduconglas*. Mention is made of her in the 3d book of Temora, and ſome other of Oſſian's poems.

† "Fil-

winds. O that I had been nigh the chief of Strumon, when blew the ſtorm of Ifrona!

WHERE, then, ye ghoſts of Morven, were you? Were you aſleep in your airy caves, the dark-gray chambers of the clouds, or ſporting with the withered leaf, the play of whiſtling boys, when you did not warn your ſons of the danger of Gaul?—But you did warn us, friendly ſpirits of our fathers! Twice you drove back our ſails to Ifrona's ſhore, as you ſent your terrible roar along the deep. But we did not underſtand the ſign. We thought you had been the ghoſts of foes, that meant to oppoſe our return.—The king drove his blade through the gray folds of their robe, as over his head they paſſed. "Purſue," he ſaid, "the thiſtles beard in other lands; or ſport, where you can, with the ſons of the feeble."

MOURNFUL they flew upon their blaſt. Their ſound was like mountain-ſighs on dark ſtreams, when cranes foretel the ſtorm. Some thought they half-heard from them the name of Gaul.

* * * * * * * * * *

"AM I alone in the midſt of thouſands? Is there no ſword to ſhine, with mine, in the darkneſs of battle?—The breeze blows towards Morven. Thither is the courſe of white-headed billows. Shall Gaul lift his ſails? His friends are not with him. What ſhall Fingal ſay, who bade his ſons to mark the path of Gaul in battle †? What ſhall the bards ſay if they ſee a cloud on the fame of the ſon of Morni? Morni! my father! wouldſt thou not bluſh if thy ſon retired? Yes, with thy white hairs, thou wouldſt hide thy face in the preſence of the heroes of other times, and ſigh in the wind above the vale of Stru-

† "Fillan and Oſcar, of the dark-brown hair! fair Ryno, with the pointed ſteel! advance with valour to the fight, and behold the ſon of Morni. Let your ſwords be like his in the ſtrife, and behold the deeds of his hands." Fingal, B. 4.

Strumon. The ghoſts of the feeble would behold thee and ſay, 'There the father of him who once fled in Ifrona.' No; thy ſon will not fly, O Morni! his ſoul is a beam of fire; it catches in its red flame the groves. If wide they ſpread their wings, as wide it ſpreads its rage.—Morni, come in thy mountain cloud, and behold thy ſon. Thy ſoul was a crowded ſtream that ſwelled and foamed, when rocks in the narrow path oppoſed its courſe; the ſame ſhall be the ſoul of Gaul.—Evirchoma! Ogal!—But lovely beams mix not with the tempeſt of heaven: they wait till the ſtorm is over. The thoughts of Gaul muſt now be of battle. All other thoughts away.—O that thou wert with me, Oſſian, as in the ſtrife of Lathmon!—But my ſoul is a ſpirit of the ſtorm. Dark-eddying it ruſhes, alone, through the troubled deep. It heaves a thouſand billows over trembling iſles; then careleſs rides upon the car of winds."

THE ſhield of Morni is ſtruck again in Ifrona *. No half-conſumed, earth-cruſted board was this orb then! Ifrona rocked with its ſound, and its thouſands gathered around Gaul. But the ſword of Morni is in the terrible hand of the chief; and, like the green branches of the foreſt, their ranks are hewn before him. Their blue

* The conduct of Gaul on this occaſion may be cenſured as raſh, in drawing upon himſelf a whole hoſt when he was alone. But as he had before ſtruck his ſhield, in hopes his friends had been near him, it is probable that he could not well decline an engagement to which himſelf had founded the alarm.—It may further be obſerved, that the behaviour of Gaul on this occaſion correſponds very much with his character in the poem of *Lathmon*, and indeed with the manners of the times, which made it diſgraceful for a hero to retire on any pretext whatever. The conduct of Oſcar in the *War of Caros* affords a remarkable inſtance of this. The great reſemblance betwixt Celtic manners and the laws of chivalry in later times, makes it probable, that the firſt had ſuggeſted moſt of thoſe ideas on which the latter were founded.

† In

blue arms are ſtrewed upon the heath, and the birds of death are hovering round.

THOU haſt ſeen, Malvina, a mighty wave recoiling, white, from the broad ſide of a whale, when her path is in the foamy deep. Thou haſt ſeen, on the top of that wave, a flock of hungry ſea-fowl gathered about the whale which they dare not approach; tho' they ſee her float, half-dead, on ocean's ſtream, with her white belly turned above like ſails: ſo ſtood the ſons of Ifrona, afraid; and kept at bay by the ſword of Gaul.

BUT the ſtrength of the chief of Strumon begins to fail. He leans to the ſide of a tree. His blood marks, with wandering ſtreams, his blue ſhield, and a hundred arrows with their heads of ſteel have torn his ſide. Still, however, he holds his ſword, a meteor of death, in his hand, and the foes are afraid.

BUT ſons of Ifrona! what means that ſtone which you try to lift? Is it to mark to future times your fame †? Ah! no; the thoughts of your ſoul are hard as ſteel. Scarce can ſeven hurl the rock from the hill: it rolls its courſe againſt the thigh of Gaul.—The chief ſinks upon his knee; but over his broad, brazen ſhield, he ſtill looks terrible. His foes are afraid to come nigh. They leave him to pine away in death, like an eagle that lies upon a rock, when the bolt of heaven hath broke its wings.

O THAT we had known in Selma that ſuch, whirlwind of battle! was thy fate. Then had we not liſtened to the ſongs of virgins, nor to the voice of harps and bards. The ſpear of Fingal had not ſlept ſo quiet by the wall; nor the ſon of Luno reſted in his

† In ancient times, pillars of ſtone were frequently erected in the field of battle to commemorate the victory.

his ſheath. Then had we not wondered, that night, to ſee the king half-riſing from the feaſt, and looking to his ſhield. "I thought," he ſaid, "the light ſpear of a ghoſt had touched its boſs; but it was only the paſſing breeze."

GHOST of Morni! why didſt thou not ſtrike it louder again; or pour thy knowledge on the dream of our reſt? Why didſt thou not come to Oſſian, and ſay, "Awake, be thy path again on the wave of the deep."—But thou hadſt been flying in haſte to Ifrona, to mourn over the fall of thy ſon.

MORNING aroſe on Strumon. Evirchoma awoke from troubled dreams. She heard the ſound of the chace on Morven, and wondered no voice of Gaul was there. She liſtens; but the rock does not echo to his cry. The groves of Strumon hear only the ſighs of the fair.

EVENING comes; but no dark ſhip is ſeen, light-bounding over the deep. The ſoul of Evirchoma is mournful.

"WHAT detains my hero in the iſle of Ifrona? Why, my love, art thou not returned with Morven's chiefs? Thou haſt perhaps miſſed them on the deep. But yet thou mighteſt have ere now returned. How long ſhall thy Evirchoma bend from the rock of waves? How long ſhall the tear wander, like a ſtream in miſt, upon her cheek?—Is the child of our love forgot? If not, where are the wonted ſmiles of his father? The tears of Ogal * deſcend with mine; and his ſighs to mine reply. O that his father heard him as,

* *Ogal*, "young Gaul." In thoſe times men did not receive their proper names till they had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by ſome renowned action, or diſcovered ſome peculiar characteriſtic in their perſon or behaviour. This, like all the other cuſtoms of the ancient Caledonians, had a happy tendency to inſpire their youth with the love of virtue and bravery; the only avenue to that immortality of fame of which they were always ſo ambitious.

as, liſping, he half-repeats his name; then quick would be the ſteps of his return to relieve him. But ah me! I remember my dream through night; and I fear the day of thy return, O Gaul, is over.

"THE ſons of Morven, methought, purſued the chaſe; but abſent was the chief of Strumon. At a diſtance I ſaw him reclined on his ſpear; on one foot only leaned the chief. The other ſeemed a column of gray miſt. It varied its form to every breeze. I approached my love; but a blaſt from the deſart came. He vaniſhed.—But dreams are the children of fear. Chief of Strumon, I ſhall again behold thee. Thou wilt lift thy fair head before me, like the beam of the eaſt, when he looks on Cromla's † haunted heath, where ſhook all night, amidſt the terror of ghoſts, the weary traveller. The ſpirits of the dark retire on their deep-ruſtling blaſt; and he, glad, takes his ſtaff, and purſues the reſt of his journey.

"Yes, my love, I ſhall behold thee. Is not that thy ſhip that climbs the diſtant wave: its ſails are like the foam of the rock; like a tree that waves its top in ſnow? Is it thy ſhip; or is it a cloud of miſt that deceives, through the darkening ſhades, my tearful eye?—Still it appears like the ſhip of my love.—Yes, dark-bounder on the rolling deep, it is thou.—Duſky night, hide not from my view his ſails. Thou beginneſt to hide them under thy raven wings: but I will bound, in this ſkiff, on the darkly-rolling deep; and meet in the folds of night my love."

† *Crom-ſlia'*, "bending hill," or "the hill of bending." It was probably a Druidical place of worſhip, which might affix to it the ideas of awe and terror here aſcribed to it.

* This

SHE went†; but no ſhip meets her on the deep. It was but a cloud low-ſailing on its wave; the bark of ſome mariner's ghoſt, purſuing the ſport of his former days.

THE ſkiff of Evirchoma flies before the wind. Ifrona's bay receives it through night, where lonely waves roll themſelves beneath the gloom of hanging woods. The thin moon glides from cloud to cloud. Its courſe, through trees, is on the edge of the hill. The ſtars, at times, glance through their parted miſt, and hide themſelves again under their vapoury veil. With the faint light, Evirchoma beholds the beauty of her child. "Thou art lovely in the dreams of thy reſt."—Over him ſhe bends a while in ſighs; and then leaves him in the womb of her ſkiff. "Reſt in peace, my child; I ſeek thy father along this winding beach."

THRICE ſhe leaves him, and thrice ſhe quick returns. She is like the dove that leaves in the cleft of Ulla's rock her young, when ſhe wanders, over the plain, in ſearch of food. She ſees the dark berry on the heath below her; but the thought of the hawk comes acroſs her ſoul, and ſhe oft returns to behold her young, before ſhe taſtes it.—Thus the ſoul of Evirchoma is divided, like a wave which the rock and the wind toſs, by turns, between them.—"But what voice is that from the breaſt of the breeze? it comes from the tree of the lonely ſhore."

"SAD," it ſays, "I pine here alone; what avails that my arm was ſo ſtrong in battle? Why does not Fingal, why does not Oſſian, know,

† This expedition of Evirchoma will not appear unnatural or extravagant, if we conſider, that, in thoſe days, the women frequently bore a part in the moſt arduous undertakings both by ſea and land. Beſides, ſhe might not probably intend to go far from the ſhore at her firſt ſetting out, as ſhe thought ſhe had ſeen the ſhip of Gaul at no great diſtance.

* What

know, that I am thus low on the ſhore of night? Ye lights above, that at times behold me, tell it in Selma, by your red ſigns, when the heroes come forth from the feaſt to behold your beauty. Ye ghoſts that glide on nightly beams, if through Morven be your eddying courſe, tell, as you paſs, the tale in the ear of the king. Tell him, that here I pour out my ſoul; that cold in Ifrona is my dwelling; that two days have brought me no food, and that my drink is the briny wave.—But tell not this in Strumon; let not your knowledge come to the dreams of Evirchoma. Be the ruſtling of your blaſts far from her halls: ſhake not roughly your wings, as, even at a diſtance, you paſs. My love might hear it; and ſome dark-boding thought might travel, as miſt, acroſs her ſoul. Be therefore your courſe, ye ſpirits of night, far off; and let the dreams of my love be pleaſant.—The morning, Evirchoma, is yet diſtant. Sleep on, with thy lovely child in thy arms, and pleaſant be thy dreams in the murmur of Strumon! Pleaſant, in the valley of roes, be thy dreams, O Evirchoma! let no thought of Gaul diſturb thee. His pains are forgot, when the dreams of his love are pleaſant."

"AND doſt thou think thy love could ſleep, and her Gaul in pain? Doſt thou think the dreams of Evirchoma could be pleaſant, while thou wert abſent? No; my heart is not unfeeling as that rock; nor did I receive my birth in Ifrona's land*.—But how

* What this Ifrona was, is uncertain; but it ſeems to have been remarkable for the cruelty of its inhabitants. In the following lines of a fragment concerning the death of Clonar, who had been ſlain there, many properties of the *Celtic hell* are aſcribed to it; from which, and the ſimilarity of the names, it is probable it might have been conſidered as a type of it.

I ſin alluidh na Freoine,
Le d' thiugh-eheo buan, 's led' ua' bheiſtan;
A thir nam pian! gun mhiadh gun bhaigh;
Dol a d' dhail be ſud mo dheiſinn.

"Ifrona,

ſhall I relieve thee, Gaul; or where ſhall Evirchoma find food in the land of foes?—I remember the tale of Caſdu-conglas.

"WHEN I was young, in my father's arms, his courſe was one night on the deep with Criſollis, beam of love. The ſtorm drove us on a rock. Three gray trees dwelt lonely there, and ſhook in the troubled air their leaf-leſs heads. At their moſſy root a few red berries crept. Theſe Caſdu-conglas pulled. He pulled them, but he taſted not. Thou needeſt them, he ſaid, Criſollis; and, to-morrow, the deer of his own mountain will ſupply Caſdu-conglas.—The morning came; the evening returned: but the rock is ſtill their dwelling.—My father wove a bark of the branches of the gray trees *; but his ſoul is feeble for want of food. 'Criſollis,' he ſaid, 'I ſleep. When the calm ſhall come, be thou gone with thy child to Idronlo; the hour of my waking is diſtant.'—Never ſhall the hills of I-dronlo behold me,' ſhe replied, 'without my love. O why didſt thou not tell me thy ſoul had failed! both might have been ſuſtained by the mountain-berries. But the breaſts of Criſollis will ſup-

"Ifrona, horrible iſle! covered with thick and ever-during miſt: thou noiſome abode of wild and venomous beaſts: thou land of pain, where fame and friendſhip are ſtrangers.—I tremble to go near thee."

As the name of *Glen-Freoin* is ſtill retained by a valley in the neighbourhood of Clyde, it is probable the ſcene of this poem was ſomewhere on that coaſt, the inhabitants of which were generally at variance with the people of Morven. The ſituation of many places ſhew, that anciently, *I*, or *Inis*, did not always ſignify an iſland, but ſometimes a promontory, or any place nearly incloſed by the ſea: as *Deiginiſh*, *Craiginiſh*, &c.

* The *Curachs* (or *vimenei alvei* of Solinus) which were the firſt boats of the Caledonians, were made of wicker, and covered again with hides. The name, for ſome time, ſeems to have continued, after the conſtruction of their veſſels was much improved, as the ancient poems give ſometimes the name of *Curach* to veſſels of a conſiderable ſize. That which brought St Columba and his companions to Iona, was called *Curach*, though near 40 feet long, if we may credit tradition.

ſupply her love. I feel them full within, and thou, my love, muſt drink. For my ſake thou muſt live, and not fall here aſleep.'—He roſe: his ſtrength returned: the wind retired: they reached I-dronlo. Often did my father lead me to Criſollis' tomb, as he told the lovely tale. 'Evirchoma,' he ſaid, 'let thy love to thy ſpouſe be ſuch, when the days of thy youth ſhall come.' And it is ſuch, O Gaul; theſe breaſts will ſupply, this night, thy ſoul. To-morrow we ſhall be ſafe on the ſhore of Strumon.

"Loveliest of thy race," ſaid Gaul, "retire thou to Strumon's ſhore; let no beam of light find thee in Ifrona. Retire in thy ſkiff with Ogal: why ſhould he fall like a tender flower, which the warrior, unfeeling, lops off with the end of his ſpear; himſelf of no ſon the father. He lops it off, with all its drops of dew; as, careleſs, he walks along, humming the ſong of the cruel. Retire, and leave me in Ifrona; for my ſtrength, like the ſtream of ſummer, is failed: I wither like the green herb before the blaſt of winter. No friendly beam of the ſun, no returning ſpring ſhall revive me.—Bid the warriors of Morven bring me to their land: but no, the light of my fame is clouded. Let them only raiſe my tomb beneath this tall tree. The ſtranger will ſee it as he looks around him from his watery courſe. Sighing, he will ſhake his head, and ſay, There is all that remains of the mighty!"

"And here too ſhall be all that remains of the fair; for I will ſleep in the ſame tomb with my love. Our narrow bed ſhall be the ſame in death; our ghoſts in the folds of the ſame gray cloud ſhall be joined. The virgins of Morven will mark, through moon-beams, our ſteps, and ſay, 'Behold, they are lovely.' Yes, traveller of the

water

watery way, drop the double tear; for here, with her beloved Gaul, is the ſlumbering Evirchoma.

" BUT ah! what voice is that in the breeze? The cries of Ogal pour, helpleſs, in my ear. They awake my ſleeping ſoul. Yes; my ſoul rolls reſtleſs within, and toſſes from ſide to ſide in its uneaſy bed. And why heaves thus the ſoul of Gaul; why burſts that ſigh from the warrior's breaſt? Feel thus the hearts of fathers for their ſons; have they, at times, the ſoul of a mother? Yes, for I feel the ſtirrings of thine: let me bear thee to the ſkiff where our child was left. Come, the burden of my love will be light: Evirchoma will be ſtrong when her Gaul is in danger.—Give me that ſpear, it will ſupport on the ſhore my ſteps."

SHE bore him to her ſkiff. She ſtruggled all night with the wave. The parting ſtars beheld the decay of her ſtrength: the morning light beheld it fail, as the miſt that melts in the beam of heat *.

I SLEPT, that night, on the hunter's heath. Morni, with all his gray, parted locks, roſe in my dreams. Above me he leaned on his trembling ſtaff. His face of age was ſad; it was marked with the courſe of the tear. The ſtream wandered, here and there, on his cheek. The deep furrows, which time had worn, were full. Thrice looked the red eye of the aged over the deep; and thrice aroſe his ſigh. " Is this," he faintly ſaid, " a time for the friend of Gaul to ſleep?"—A blaſt comes, ruſtling, along the bended trees. Its noiſe awakes the cock of the heath. At the root of his dark-brown

* In the moſt common editions of *Tiomna 'Ghuill* a long dialogue is foiſted in here, which is rejected as ſpurious, or belonging to ſome other Gaul whoſe wife was called *Aina*. It begins with

A Righbhin is binne ceol
Gluais gu malda, 's na gabh bron, &c.

brown buſh, he lifts his head from beneath his wing; and, trembling, raiſes the mournful, plaintive voice.—I ſtarted at the cry from my dream. I ſaw Morni rolled away, a gray cloud, in the fold of the blaſt. I purſued the path which he marked on the ſea. I found on the blue face of the wave, ſheltered by a deſert iſle, the ſkiff. On the dark ſide of it leaned the head of Gaul. Under his elbow reſted the ſhield of battle. Over its edge half-looked the wound, and poured the red-ſtream around its boſs. I lifted the helmet from his face. His yellow locks, folded in ſweat, were wandering on his brow. At the burſt of my grief he tried to raiſe his eye; but it was heavy. Death came, like night on the eye of the ſun, and covered it with all its darkneſs.—Never more, O Gaul, ſhalt thou behold the father of thy Oſcar.

Beside the ſon of Morni is the decayed beauty of Evirchoma. Her child ſmiles, careleſs, in her arms; and plays with the head of the ſpear. Her words were few: her voice was feeble. I gave her my hand to raiſe her up. She laid it on the head of Ogal, as, ſighing, ſhe pierc'd with her look my melting ſoul.—No more ſhall Evirchoma riſe! Sweet helpleſs child, thou needeſt no longer cling to the breaſt of thy mother. Oſſian ſhall be thy father: but Evirallin is not; and who ſhall ſupply the place of Evirchoma! —But I feel the meltings of my ſoul return.—Why ſhould Oſſian remember all the griefs that are paſt? Their memory is mournfully-pleaſant; but his tears would fail.

We came to Strumon's moſſy ſtreams. Silence dwelt around their banks. No column of ſmoke, blue-curling, riſes from the hall. No voice of ſongs is there; no ſoft trembling ſound of the harp. The breeze ruſhes, whiſtling, through its open porch; and

lifts

lifts the dry, ruſtling leaf, upon its eddying wing. The perching eagle ſits already on its lofty top, and marks it out as the place of her repoſe. "Here," ſhe ſeems to ſay, "I may ſafely build my neſt; for who can climb its height, to make my brown ſons afraid?"—The dun little ſon of the roe beholds her, as, wandering below, he looks up to what he thinks a gray rock.—He beholds her, and is afraid. He hides himſelf under a broad ſhield, near the gate of the houſe.—Stretched acroſs the threſhold, ſwift Coſ-ula lies. He hears a ruſtling near. He thinks it may be the tread of Gaul. In his joy he ſtarts up, and ſhakes from his dim eye the tear. But when he ſees it is only the ſon of the roe, he turns his mournful face away. He lies again on his cold ſtone, and the ſong of his grief is diſmal.

But who can tell the ſadneſs of Morven's heroes? They come in ſilence, each from his own winding vale; ſlowly moving, like the dark ſhadow of miſt on the brown ruſhy plain, when the wind is ſcarce awake on the hill. They ſee the bulwark of the battle low; and their burſting tears, like the ooze of rocks, deſcend. Fingal leaned to a blaſted pine, that was overturned at the head of Gaul. His gray locks, as he bends, half-hide his tears; but in his white beard they meet the whiſtling wind.

"And art thou fallen," at length he ſaid; "art thou fallen, firſt of my heroes! when my ſtrength has failed? Shall I hear thy voice no more in my halls, nor the ſound of thy ſhield in my battles? Shall thy ſword no more lighten the dark path of my danger; nor thy ſpear ſcatter whole hoſts of my enemies? Shall thy dark ſhip ride no more the ſtorm, while thy joyful rowers pour before them the ſong on the watery mountains? Shall the children of Morven

no

no more awake my ſoul from its thought, as they cry, ‘ Behold the ſhip of Gaul !’ Shall the harps of virgins, and the voice of bards, no more be heard when thou art coming ?—I ſee not the red-ſtreaming of thy banners on the heath ; the tread of thy foot is not there ; nor the ſound of thy unmiſſing arrow. The bounding of thy dogs is not on the hill ; they mournfully howl in the door of thy empty houſe. The deer grazes on the plain before them : but they weep on ; they do not heed him ; for they ſee not Gaul returning.—Alas ! ſons of the chaſe, the day of his return is paſt. His glad voice ſhall call you no more, in the morning, to purſue the ſteps of roes through rocky mountains. Here, forgetful of the chaſe, he reſts ; nor can even the ſound of Morven’s ſhield, O Gaul, awake thee !

“ Strength of the warrior, what art thou! To-day, thou rolleſt the battle, a cloud of duſt, before thee ; and the dead ſtrew thy path, as the withered leaves mark the courſe of a ghoſt of night. —To-morrow, the ſhort dream of thy valour is over ; the terror of thouſands is vaniſhed. The beetle, on his duſky wing, hums the ſong of triumph over the mighty ; and, unmoleſted, offends him.—

“ Why, ſon of the feeble, didſt thou wiſh for the ſtrength of the chief of Strumon, when thou didſt behold him brightening in the courſe of his ſteel, as brightens a pillar of ice in the midſt of ſun-beams ? Didſt thou not know that the ſtrength of the warrior ſoon fails, as melts in the beam that ice which thou haſt been viewing ? Its date is ſhort ; like the bright cloud that glitters to the ray of the evening. The hunter ſees it from his rock, as he hies him home, and admires the rain-bow form of its

beauty. But a few moments, on their eagle-pinion, paſs; the ſun ſhuts his eye of light; the blaſt whirls that way his ruſtling courſe, and a dark miſt is all that remains of the gay form.—It is all, O Gaul! that now remains of thee.—But thy memory, chief of Fingal's heroes, ſhall remain. No cloud of miſt that ſhall paſs away, on its own gray wings is thy fame.

"RAISE†, ye bards, his tomb; with that of the ſun-beam of his love, Evirchoma. This gray ſtone ſhall mark to the traveller the place of his repoſe; and that tall oak ſhall ſhade it from the noon-day heat. The paſſing breeze ſhall bid its boughs be early green, and long preſerve their beauty. Its leaves ſhall ſhoot out their head, through the ſhower of the ſpring, while other trees are ſtill bare, and the heath around them blaſted. The birds of ſummer, from their diſtant land, ſhall firſt perch on Strumon's oak; from afar they ſhall behold its green beauty. The ghoſt of Gaul will hear, in his cloud, their ſong; and the virgins of the race to come will praiſe Evirchoma. The memory of you two, while theſe monuments remain, ſhall travel through future years together.—Then, when thou, O ſtone, ſhalt crumble into duſt; and thou, O tree, moul-

† This paragraph loſes much of the artleſs ſimplicity of the original, as it could not be rendered with perſpicuity without paraphraſing ſome of its images. The original paſſage is here annexed, that ſuch as chooſe to do it may have it in their power to compare it with the tranſlation.

Cairibh, a chlanna nan teud,
Leaba Ghuill, 's a dheo-greine la' ris;
Far an comh'raichear a leab' ann cein.
Ged' raibh geugan ard ga sgaile'
Fui' sgeì' na daraig is guirme bla',
Is luaithe fas, 's is buaine dreach;
A bhruchdas a duilleach air anail na froise,
'S an raon man cuairt di seargte.
A duilleach, o iomal na tire,
Chitear le eoin an t samhruidh;
Is luidhidh gach eun mar a thig
Air barra' geige na Strumoin.
Cluinnidh Goll an ecilair na cheo,
'S oighean a' seinn air Aoibhir-chaomha.
'S gus an caochail gach ni dhiu so
Cha sgarar ar cuimhne o' cheile.
—Gus an crion gu luaithre a chlach,
'S an searg as le h aois a gheug so,
Gus an sguir na sruthain a ruith
'S an dea' mathair-uisge nan sleibhte;
Gus an caillear ann dilinn aois
Gach filidh 's dan is aobhar sgeil,
Cho'n fheoruich an t Aineal "Co mac Morna,
No c'ait an co'nuidh' Ri' na Strumoin?"

moulder with age away; when thou, mighty ſtream, ſhalt ceaſe to run, and the mountain-ſpring ſhall, no more, ſupply thy courſe; when your ſongs, O bards, in the dark flood of Time ſhall be loſt; and the memory of yourſelves, with thoſe you ſung, in its vaſt current be ſwept away and forgot:—Then, perhaps, may ceaſe to be heard the fame of Gaul; and the ſtranger may aſk, "Who was Morni's ſon, and who was Strumon's chief?"

DUTHONA:

A POEM*.

THE ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, purſuing Dorla who had carried off the ſpoils of Selma in his abſence, lands in the night in Duthona, the iſland of his friend Conar. His landing is obſerved and oppoſed by Dorla, who had alſo called here and ſubdued Conar. Fingal thinking he had been oppoſed by his friends, was ſatisfied with making them retreat a little, till day-light ſhould ſhew them their miſtake. But learning how matters ſtood from Conar, who is accidentally diſcovered in a cave where he had been confined by Dorla, ſpies are ſent to watch the motions of the enemy.—Next morning Fingal and the remains of Conar's people engage with Dorla, who falls in battle.—Minla the daughter of Conar, who had been found concealed in the habit of a young bard, is unexpectedly reſtored to her father, who gives her in marriage to one of Fingal's heroes.

WHY doſt thou roar ſo loud, O ſea, on Morven's rocky coaſt; and why, O wind of the ſouth, doſt thou pour thy ſtrength againſt the ſhore of my echoing hills? Is it to detain my ſails from the land of the foe, and ſtop my growing fame?—But, ocean, thy billows roar in vain; and thou, wind of the ſouth, mayeſt blow; but you cannot detain the ſails of Fingal, from the land of the diſtant Dorla. The roar of your ſtrength ſhall ſoon decay;

* *Du'-thonna*, "the iſle of dark waves." This poem, from one of the incidents mentioned in it, is often called *Dan Oi'-mara*, or "The ſong of the maid on the ſhore." The verſification in ſeveral places is broken, and only ſupplied from the traditionary tale which accompanies the poem. A few lines in the beginning are omitted, and the tranſlation begins with the following ſtanza:

Is garbh leam beucaich do thonn,
A mhuir cheann-ghlas, ri bonn mo ſhleibh;
Is ofnaiche att'ar, eiti', a deas,
Chon e mo leas gu do' ſheid ſibh, &c.

decay; and the blue face of my ſeas ſhall be calm behind, when you retire to reſt in the green groves of the deſart.—Yes, thy ſtrength, O wind, ſhall fail; but the fame of Fingal ſhall remain: my renown ſhall be heard in the land that is diſtant.

The king ſpoke, and his heroes gathered around. The buſhy hair of Dumolach ſings in the wind. Leth bends over his ſhield of braſs; it is marked with many a ſcar. Morlo toſſes in air his glittering ſpear; and the joy of battle is in the eye of Gormallon.

We ruſh through ocean's ſurgy foam. Whales, trembling, fly before us on the deep. Iſles ſee us, and fly out of our way; they hide themſelves behind the path of our ſhip. Duthona lifts its head like a rock of ooze, which the diſtant wave ſeems, at times, to intercept. "It is the land of Conar," ſaid Fingal; "the land of the friend of my people!"

Night deſcends on the ſable deep. The mariner cries, It is dark. He wanders from his courſe: he looks in vain for the guiding ſtar.—He half-ſees it, through the torn ſkirt of a ſhowery cloud: with joy he bids his companions behold it. They look up; but the window of the cloud is ſhut, and the light is again concealed.—The ſteps of the night, on the deep, are dark. Let our courſe be to the ſhore till morning ariſe with her yellow locks in the eaſt; till dark waves clothe themſelves in light, and mountains lift their green heads in day.

Our courſe is to Duthona's bay.—But ſee that dim ghoſt on the rock! He is tall as the gray pine to which he leans. His ſhield is a broad cloud. Behind it rolls in darkneſs the riſing moon. That column of dark-blue miſt, ſtudded above with a red ſtar, is his ſpear; and that meteor that gleams on the heath, his ſword. Winds,

in

in their eddies, lift at times, like ſmoke, his hair. Theſe flames, in two caves below it, are his eyes.—Often had Fingal ſeen the ſign of battle; but who could believe it in the land of Conar, his friend?

The king aſcends the rock. The blade of Luno waves a meteor of light in his hand, and Carril walks behind him. The ſpirit beholds the warrior approach: on the wings of his blaſt he flies. Fingal purſues him with his voice: the hills of Duthona hear the ſound. They ſhake with all their gray rocks and groves. From their dreams of danger, the people ſtart along the heath, and kindle the alarm of the flame.

Arise, my warriors, ſaid the returning king, with a ſigh; ariſe, let each gird on his mail, and ſpread his broad ſhield before him. We muſt fight; but not with the wonted joy of our ſtrength when the roar of the battle roſe. Our friends meet us through night; and Fingal will not tell his name *. Our foes might hear it, and ſay, "The warriors of Morven were once afraid." No; let each gird on his mail, and ſpread the ſhield: but let the ſpear err of its mark, and the arrow fly to the wind. With morning light we ſhall be ſeen of our friends, and our joy ſhall be great in Duthona.

We

* In thoſe days of heroiſm it was reckoned cowardice to tell one's name to an enemy, leſt it ſhould be conſidered as claiming kindred with him and declining the combat. The ſame extravagant notions of honour ſeem to have prevailed among ſome other nations of antiquity. In the Argonautic expedition, Jaſon, after having been hoſpitably entertained by Cyzicus king of the Deliones, was driven back on his coaſt, through night, and he and his people taken for Pelaſgians, with whom they were then at war. Rather than diſpenſe with this punctilio of honour, Jaſon fought till day-light ſhewed his friends their miſtake, after a great many of them, with their king, had been killed. Vid. Ancient Univ. Hiſt. *of Fab. and Heroic Times*, § 6.

We met, in our rattling ſteel, the darkly-moving hoſt. Their arrows fell, like a ſhower of hail, on our ſhields; but we fought not the fall of our friends. They gathered about us, like the ſea about a rock. The king ſaw that his people muſt fight or fall. He came from his hill in the awful ſtride of his ſtrength, like a ghoſt that hath clothed himſelf in ſtorms. The moon raiſed her head above the hill, and beamed on the ſhining blade of Luno. It glittered in the hand of the king, like a pillar of ice in the fall of Lora, when the ſun is bright in the midſt of his journey. Duthona ſaw its blaze, but could not bear its light. They retired, like darkneſs when it ſees the ſteps of the morning, and ſunk in a wood that roſe behind.

Slow-moving like Lubar, when he repeats in Dura's plain his courſe, we came to a hollow ſtream that ran before us on the heath. Its bed is between two banks of ferns, amidſt many an aged birch. There we talked of the ſtorms of battle and the actions of former heroes. Carril ſung of the times of old: Oſſian praiſed the deeds of Conar; nor did his harp forget the mild beauty of Minla.

The voice of the ſong ceaſed. The breeze whiſtled along the gurgling ſtream. It bore to our ear the ſound of grief. It was ſoft as the voice of ghoſts in the boſom of groves, when they travel over the tombs of the dead.

Go, Oſſian, ſaid the king, and ſearch the banks of the ſtream; ſome one of our friends lies there, on his dark ſhield, overturned like a tree in the ſtrife of night. Bring him to Fingal, that he may apply the herbs of the mountain; leſt any cloud ſhould darken our joy in the land of Duthona.

I WENT, and liſtened to the ſong of wo; my tears flowed, in ſilence, over the ſtream.

" FORLORN and dark is my dwelling in the ſtorm of night *. No friendly voice is heard, ſave the cry of the owl from the cleft of her rock. No bard is nigh in my lonely cave, to deceive the tedious night.—But night and day are the ſame to me; no beam of the ſun travels here in my darkly dwelling. I ſee not his yellow hair in the eaſt; nor, in the weſt, the red beam of his parting. I ſee not the moon, ſailing through pale clouds, in her brightneſs; nor trembling, through trees, on the blue face of the ſtream. No warm beam from either viſits the cave of Conar. O that I had fallen in the ſtrife of Dorla; that the tomb had received my Minla! Then had the fame of Duthona paſſed away, like autumn's ſilent beam, when it moves over the brown fields between the ſhadows of miſt. The children under Duthrona's oak feel it warm, and bleſs the beam. It is over; they bend their bows, and forget it.—Forget me alſo, children of my people, if Dorla does not meet you, like the blaſting wind of the froſt, when the roſe-buds of the wood are tender. O that I had met death before you; when I ſtrode with Fingal before the ſtrength of Swaran! Then my tomb might riſe before the king, and my fame be ſung by the voice of Oſſian. The bards of the diſtant years, ſitting around the winter-flame, would ſay, when the feaſt was over, ' Liſten to the ſong of Conar.'—But now my fame ſhall not be heard; my tomb ſhall not be known. The ſtranger ſtumbles on a gray ſtone in Duthona. Its head is covered with the rank, whiſtling graſs. He turns it away

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* This ſong of Conar has in the original an air of melancholy extremely ſuitable to the occaſion of it.

Is doracha 'ſan doirinn mo cho'nuidh!
Gun ghuth am choir ach ian tiamhaidh;
Threig am Bard :—tha'n oidhche mall;
O's oidhche gach la dhamhſa, &c.

with the end of his ſpear. He perceives the mouldering tomb. ‘ Who ſleeps,’ he aſks, ‘ in this narrow houſe?’ The children of the vale reply, ‘ We know not; the ſong doth not record his name.”

—But it ſhall record thy name, O Conar! thou ſhalt not be forgotten by the voice of Cona. Come, leave thy cave, and lift again the ſpear of battle. The foe ſhall wither, like the froſted fern, before thee; and thy fame ſhall flouriſh, as the green oak of Duthona, when it lifts its tall head above the miſt of the vale, and ſpreads its glittering leaf to the ſhower of the ſun.

“ Friendly is thy voice, ſon of night; for ghoſts affright not me. No; their voice is pleaſant to forſaken Conar. O let thy converſe be oft in my cave! our words ſhall be of the narrow houſe, and of the airy dwellings of heroes. Of other worlds we ſhall ſpeak: but of my friends, of my fame, we ſhall be ſilent.—My fame is departed like the melting of miſts on Mora, when the ſun is high, and the clouds retire to the deſart. My friends, too, are diſtant: between their peaceful ſhields they ſleep, and no dream of me diſturbs them. And let them ſleep; ſpirit of the friendly ſoul, my dwelling ſhall ſoon be with thee in the peaceful abode of thy reſt. Together we ſhall viſit the children of grief in their nightly cave, and make them forget their pain in their dreams*. We will wander with their ſouls through fields of fame; and bid the mighty ſhake in their preſence. Their thong ſhall be a robe: their cave the noble Selma. The wind in their ear ſhall be the muſic of harps, and the whiſtling graſs the ſong of virgins. Till then be thy

* The bard, it would appear from this paſſage, was of opinion, that dreams were ſometimes occaſioned by the agency of departed ſpirits, who had the power of impreſſing the mind with ſenſations of either the pleaſing or painful kind.

thy viſits to Conar frequent; for thy voice to me is pleaſant, airborne ſon of the night."

I CUT the thongs from the hand of the chief, and brought him to the king. Their faces brightened with joy between their gray locks, when they met; for they remembered their early days: The days, when firſt they drew the ſtring in the moſſy vale of ſtreams; when the ſtag was but the thiſtle's beard, and the deer the wandering down of the deſart. Their years afterwards grew together; and roes, before their ſwift ſteps, bounded on Gormal.

BUT who, ſaid Fingal, hath confined the friend of Morven to his cave? Strong muſt be his arm; and unerring his ſteel in the ſtrife of battle.

"DORLA heard that my arm had failed; and he came to my halls by night, when my friends were abſent. I fought; but his numbers prevailed. Dorla is ſtill in Duthona: Minla is ſorrowful in his preſence; and my people, through their ſecret vales, are ſcattered."

FINGAL heard the words of Conar; and the gathering of his mild brows, like clouds that cover the ſtorm, is terrible. He ſhakes the aſpen ſpear in his hand, and looks on the ſword of Luno. "This is no time," he ſays, "for reſt; when he who ſpoiled Morven is ſo nigh. His people too are many; for they met us in the midſt of night, when we thought they had been the hoſt of Conar.—Oſſian, be thy ſteps, with Gormallon, along the ſhore. Dumolach and Leth! to Conar's halls; and if Minla be there, ſpread before her your dark-broad ſhields, and defend her. Morlo, be thou on the heath, that our foes may not ſpread the ſail to the wind, before the ſun ſhall light us to battle. And where art thou, Carril of the

ſong? Be nigh the chief of Duthona with thy harp. Its ſound is a beam of light that riſes in the midſt of ſtorms. The tempeſt, when it ſhines, retires; and the darkneſs flies to the deſart."

CARRIL came with his harp. Its ſound was ſoft, as the gliding of ghoſts on the bank of Lora; when they hide themſelves in the white miſt of noon, and their ſound is on the gale of the ſtream. —Move in ſilence, ſtream of night, that we may liſten to the ſong of the bard.

"OVER Lara of ſtreams there bends an oak. Below it, one lone thiſtle lifts, between two moſſy ſtones, its head. It ſheds, in the paſſing ſtream, its drops of dew. Two ghoſts are ſeen there at noon, when the ſun is on the plain, and ſilence reigns in Morven. One is thy ghoſt, aged Ural? Thy hair wanders, a whiter miſt, over two clouds that form thy darkened eyes.—And who is that in the cloud of ſnow before thee? Who but that fair huntreſs of the roe, thy daughter?

"THE youths of Lara were at the chaſe: they were ſpreading the feaſt in the booth of the deſart. Colgar ſaw them; and came to Lara in ſecret, like the torrent that ruſhes, ſudden, from the hill, when no ſhower is ſeen by the ſunny vale.——'Daughter of Ural, thou muſt go with Colgar. The thongs muſt confine thy father. He might ſtrike the ſhield. The youths might hear its ſound in the deſart.'

"COLGAR, I love thee not. Leave me here with my father. None is with him. His eyes are dark, and his gray hairs are lonely.

"COLGAR would not hear. The daughter of Ural muſt go with him; but her ſteps on the heath are mournful. She moves, ſad, like

like the miſt of ſhowers, when the ſun is dim in his cloud, and the valley of ſtreams is ſilent. A roe bounds on the heath; he ſteals below them towards a ſmall ſtream. His brown ſides, at times' appear thro' the green rank ferns.—'Colgar, give me that bow; I have learnt to pierce the deer.'—He gave the bow. She drew the ſtring. Colgar fell.—She returned to Lara, and the ſoul of her father was glad. The evening of his life was like the departure of the ſun on the mountain of ſpring; like the leaf of autumn, when it drops in the ſilent vale. The days of Moràla on the hills were many; in death ſhe reſted, in peace, with her father.——Over Lara of ſtreams there bends an oak. Below it are two beds. One, Ural, is thine; and thine, daughter of the bow, is the other beſide it*."

I WENT with Gormallon to the ſhore. Below its rocks we found a youth. His arm, iſſuing from the light mail, reſted on a broken harp, and the ſtaff of a ſpear is beſide him. The moon, riſing like a half ſhield, looked through the beard of the rock on his bended head. In the midſt of his grief it waved from ſide to ſide, like a pine in the ſigh of winds.

WHO is this, ſaid Gormallon, that dwells lonely in the midſt of night? Art thou of the hoſt of Dorla; or from the halls of Conar?

I AM, (replied the youth, trembling as the leaf in the blaſt, as the graſs in the ſtream of winds,) I am of the bards who lived in Conar's halls. Dorla heard my ſong, and ſpared me. Hereafter I may

* The bards always adapted the ſubject of their ſongs to the ſituation of their hearers. The reſemblance between the caſe of Ural's daughter and the daughter of Conar, was what gave riſe to this, the happy end of which would give the old man ſome gleam of comfort.

* Gor-

may remember that he carried the arms from Selma, and ſpread the battle on the fields of Duthona.

" REMEMBER him thou mayeſt *; but what canſt thou ſay in his praiſe? He ſtole the arms from Selma; and came upon Conar, when his friends were abſent. His arm is feeble in danger, but ſtrong when none is to oppoſe. He is a cloud that riſes only in a calm; a dark miſt, that never lifts his head from the fen, till the winds of the vale have retired.---But the ſtorm from Morven ſhall overtake this cloud; Fingal ſhall ſcatter his beauty."

" I REMEMBER the king," ſaid the youth, " ſince he was in the halls of Duthona. The voice of Oſſian I remember, and the ſtately warriors of Morven. But Morven is far from Duthona."---The ſigh ſtopt his words, and the burſting of his grief was heard, like the breaking of ice on Lego, or the mountain winds in the cave of Ardven.

" FEEBLE † is thy ſoul," ſaid Gormallon; " thou art not of the halls of Conar, nor of the race of his bards. They ſung of the deeds of battle. Their ſouls ſwelled with the joy of danger, as ſwell the white ſails of Fingal under the blaſt of Morven. Thou art of the friends of Dorla.—Go, then, thou feeble arm, and tell him that Morven purſues him. Never more ſhall he ſee the deer-leſs hills of his heathy deſart."

GORMALLON, reproach not the youth, ſaid I. The ſoul of the brave, at times, may fail; but it returns again, like the ſun when the ſtorm is over. He ſmiles from the height of his courſe, and the clouds are ſcattered. The green-headed pine waves no longer

* Gormallon ſpeaks.

† The moſt of this paragraph, and part of that before and after it, are ſelected from the traditionary tale of the poem. The dialogue is there carried on to a greater length, but appears too frivolous to be tranſlated.

longer its ſpiry top; the blue face of the ſea is calm; and the glittering vales, in the midſt of ſun-beams, rejoice.

I TOOK the youth by the hand. I brought him to Carril of ſongs, till the ſtrife of battle ſhould be over; for the light now ſhone on the arms of Dorla. His people, ſpeechleſs and pale, behold the ſtrength of Morven and the ſword of Conar. They ſtand in their place like the benighted hunter on Cromla, when the terror of ghoſts ſurrounds him. The cold ſweat bedims his eye: his trembling knees forbid his flight; and down he ſinks in the midſt of his journey.

DORLA beheld the white eyes of his people, and the big tear hangs forward in his own. The ſpear of Morven glittered in his hand as he ſpoke.

"WHY ſtand we in pale ſilence here, like theſe gray trees around us? The warriors of Morven are few; and our numbers may prevail. They may have their fame, but have not we alſo fought with heroes? Or, ſhould any think of flight, where is the way to our ſhips, but through the midſt of the foe?—Let us then ruſh on in our wrath, that our arms may be ſtrong, and the joy of our friends be great when we return to the ſtreams of Caruth."

* * * * * * * * * *

CONAR ſtruck the ſhield of Duthona. His ſcattered people heard it. They lift their heads from their ſecret place, like the ſtreams of the heath of Cona, which in the day of drought hide themſelves under the ſtones of the brook; but when the warm ſhowers deſcend, they come forth from their retreat; and, roaring, ruſh from every hill.

WE met: we fought; and Dorla fell by the ſpear of Conar. The king

king ſaw the foe brought low. He came in his mildneſs, and ſpoke to the people of fallen Dorla.

" FINGAL delights not in the fall of his foes, altho' they make him unſheathe the ſword. Return to your land; and come not again to Morven, nor to the ſea-beat ſhore of Duthona. Short is the wintery day of the people that lift the ſword againſt Fingal. A pillar of ſmoke that comes acroſs the tempeſt is the life of thoſe who fight with the warriors of Morven. Return; and carry the fallen Dorla to his land, that the white hand of his ſpouſe may rear his tomb, and her tearful eye behold his ghoſt, in the vapour of miſt, on Caruth.—Why didſt thou riſe ſo early from thy reſt; ſpouſe of the fallen Dorla? What doſt thou there, leaning on thy gray rock, with thy locks wandering in the drops of dew. Why travels thy eye on the diſtant wave; theſe are not the ſails of thy love? Thou ſeeſt but the foam that breaks round the ſporting whale on the bubbling deep.—Murmuring Caruth hears the ſighs of the fair, and its banks learn the name of Dorla. Her two children lean to their mother's knee. They ſee the round tear hang on her cheek. They lift their little hand to ſeize the bright pearl. ' Why,' they ſay, ' does our mother weep; and where ſlept, laſt night, our father?' ——So perhaps, Oſſian, is thy Everallin now anxious for thee. She leads thy little Oſcar to Morven's brow, that ſhe may view the diſtant ſea. He toſſes his bulruſh ſpear before him, and looks ſtern over the little ſhield of woven reeds. Think of them, my ſon, and ſpare the warrior, who, like the unhappy Dorla, leaves behind him a weeping ſpouſe.—Alas, Dorla, why art thou ſo early fallen!"

Evirallin! Oſcar! ye beams of joy which are now no more! How can Oſſian touch the harp or ſing of war, when your lovely forms

forms ſhoot, like falling ſtars, acroſs his ſoul? O that I were a companion of your blue courſe, light-travellers of the mountains on high! When ſhall our ghoſts meet in clouds, and glide in the evening gale, when its duſky wave ſcarce bends the top of pines on Cona? When ſhall we lift our unſhorn heads in other lands, like ſtars of night in the heathy deſart? O that it were ſoon! that my bed were made in the down of clouds! What the bed of heath is to the weary hunter of Lona, that is the tomb to the heavy bard. I will ſleep. Gray ſtone, wilt thou and the ſong preſerve then my name? No; the ſeaſon of thy age, O ſtone, will come, and thou wilt ſink down with me to the place where the weary repoſe on their lowly bed of earth. The ſtranger will lean on his ſpear, and aſk for thy place; but the ſons of little men will not know it. Light of the ſong, canſt thou ſhew the ſtranger the place; canſt thou tell where ſleeps the gray ſtone of the bard? No; like me, thou art old; the miſt of years hath cloſed upon thy light. Our memory ſhall paſs away like the tale of Duthona, which already is dim on the ſoul of the bard.

The people of Dorla ride in ſilence over the deep. No ſong rolls before them on the wave. The bards lean their heads upon their harps. Along the wet ſtrings wander, through tears, their gray hairs. The mariner loſes, in the miſt of thought, his courſe. The rower, ſighing, ſtops in the midſt of his ſtroke.—Ah! children of grief, remember your ſteps are on the deep. The ſtorm and the night are behind you.

We come to the halls of Conar; but the chief is mournful. The ſigh lifts the mail upon his breaſt. It riſes like a wave when it folds the ſtorm in its boſom. The light of his eye travels not in

its wonted brightneſs through his hall; it is dim as the winter-ſun, when the thunder-ſhower rides, in its own dark cloud, before it.---None ſays to the chief, "Why art thou ſad?" For, abſent is that ſtar of night; the bright, ſoft-looking eye of Minla.

FINGAL beheld the darkneſs of the chief, and covered his own grief under the plume of his helmet. "Carril," he ſoftly ſaid, "where is thy ſoul of ſong? Come, and with thee bring thy harp."

CARRIL comes, bending gray on his ſtaff. The voice of the harp is in his hand. Behind him walks the young bard from the ſhore of night: but his light mail falls to the ground. A white hand riſes to cover the ſpreading bluſh. Whoſe hand is that ſo white? whoſe face, through wandering locks, bluſhes ſo mild?—"Minla," cried Conar, "is it thou!"---Her arms in ſilence fold themſelves about his neck.---The ſoul of the aged returned, as the ſun when the ſtorm is over. He gave the fair to Gormallon; and we ſpread the ſails, with ſongs, for Morven *.

* This is among the few ancient Galic poems which have a happy concluſion, and on that account deſerves to be preſerved. The ancient bards, no doubt, employed their muſe in celebrating joyful as well as mournful events. But, as melancholy tender ſcenes are moſt apt to make a laſting impreſſion on the memory, the latter are often remembered when the former are loſt and forgotten.

DER-

DERMID*:

A POEM.

The ARGUMENT.

This poem opens with an addreſs to the valley of Cona, in which its preſent ſilence is contraſted with its former buſy ſcenes. Of theſe the ſtory of Dermid's killing a wild boar of an enormous ſize, is ſingled out. After Dermid had killed this boar, he is deſired by Connan, who bore him a grudge which the poem accounts for, to meaſure his length, with his bare ſoles, againſt the direction of the briſtles on his back. Dermid, it ſeems, thought it might be a reflection upon his valour to decline the requeſt. He complied; but the conſequence proved fatal.

Graina, Dermid's wife, having been alarmed by the ſtory of an old man whom ſhe had met, after parting with Dermid, ran to his aſſiſtance with a ſpear, and arrived juſt as that which he had was broken in his encounter with the boar: but ſhe herſelf being wounded by a random ſhot in the courſe of the chaſe, ſits down near enough to be witneſs of the death of her beloved Dermid. Both are interred in the ſame place, and their elegy ſung by the bards.

HOW peaceful, this night, art thou, O vale of Cona! No voice of thy hounds, no ſound of thy harps is heard. The ſons of the chaſe are gone to their reſt, and the bed has been made for the bards. The murmur of thy ſtream, O Cona, is ſcarce perceived: the breeze ſhakes not the dew off thy bended graſs.

* Dermid, the ſon of Duino, is frequently mentioned in other poems of Oſſian, and much celebrated in the tales of later times. Theſe, mixing their marvellous with the original poem, have rendered it in a great meaſure abſurd and extravagant. But they are for the moſt part of ſo heterogeneous a nature as to be eaſily ſeparated.

† Cia

The gray thiſtle hangs over thy bank its ſleepy head; its hairs are heavy with the drops of night.—The roe ſleeps, fearleſs, in the booth of the hunter; his voice hath ceaſed to diſturb her. She ſees his tomb, amids green ferns, before her. Light-leaps over its mound her little kid. He rubs with his horn the moſs from its gray ſtone; and on the ſoft heap, when tired of play, he lays himſelf down to reſt.

VALE of Cona †, how art thou changed! And thou, hill of Golbun, how quiet is now thy heath! Thou covereſt thy head with thy dark veil of miſt; and ſlumbereſt in the noon of day. No voice of the hunter, no cry of the hound, travels along thy dark-brown ſide to awake thee.—I move forth when all is calm; I lean my gray head on my ſpear, and liſten if I may hear the echo of thy rocks. But thou art ſilent, O Golbun, in thy bed of clouds: no voice of thine is heard; ſave when thou replieſt to the ſportive cry of the deer, when evening has half-hid the ſun in the wave of the weſt. Then, thou doſt reply; but thy words are few: thou ſoon compoſeſt thyſelf again to thy ſlumber.

THOU wert not thus quiet, O Cona, when the king purſued thy deer, and made thy ſtream ſhake between its woody locks; nor was thy ſilence ſuch, O Golbun, when the ſon of Duino purſued thy boar, foaming like Lora in his winding courſe.

LISTEN

† Cia tiamhaidh thu nochd a *Ghlean-caothan?*
Gun ghuth gaothair thu, 's gun cheol, &c.

The *Gleann-caothan*, or *Cona*, of Oſſian has been ſuppoſed by ſome to be Glenco in Argyleſhire; and by others, Strathconan in Murray. Both ſeem to be at too great a diſtance from the ſcene of this poem, if we may rely on tradition, which places it in *Sli'gaoil* near Kintyre. What appears moſt probable is, that Fingal often ſhifted his habitation for the convenience of hunting, and might give ſeveral other places the ſame name with that of his principal reſidence.

——parvam Trojam, ſimulataque magnis,
Pergama.

LISTEN, ſon of Alpin, to the tale; thou wilt pour its light on the dark ſtream of future years.

THE morning was calm on Cona. Mountains ſaw in Ocean their gilded heads. The ſon of the deer beheld his young branches in the ſtream, when the ſound of Fingal's horn is heard. Starting, he aſks his mother what it means. She, trembling, bids him fly to the deſart.—

" THIS day," ſaid the king, " we purſue the boar, the deadly boar of Golbun."

* * * * * * * * * * †

WE ſent the ſons of the chaſe to the hill. Their cries, as they climb, are deep and loud. Golbun with all its woods reſounds.

THE ſound roſe on Dermid's ear, as he lay in the cave of his reſt. As a mountain-ſtream in the midſt of rain, ſo leapt his ſoul with joy at the voice of the chaſe. " My red ſpear, where art thou? and where art thou, my dark bow?"

NOT ſo glad was Graina in her cave, to which ſhe had retired with her love from Connan's hate. The dark ſoul of Connan had loved Graina; but Graina gave her heart to Dermid. " Heed not," ſhe ſaid, " the cry of the hounds; the chace of heroes is not awake on the hill."

" FAIR is thy form, my love; and like the bloom of trees in ſpring

† Some repeat here a ſmall fragment called *Nos Scilge*, or " The manner of hunting." As this poem is wholly a hunting adventure, it is probable theſe verſes ought to have a place in it, if their incorrectneſs did not forbid it. The moſt accurate of them are the following, which denote their armour to have been nearly the ſame as in going down to battle.

Gun ar n eide' 's gun ar n airm
Cha rachamaid a ſheilg nan cnoc;
Bhiodh luireach oirn 's ceann-bheairt chorr,
'S da ſhleagh mhor ann dorn gach fir.
Bhiodh ſgia uain' air a gheibhe' buaidh,
'S cloidhe cruaidh gu ſgolta cheann,
Bogha cruadhach agus iughair
'S caogad guineach ann am bolg.

ſpring is thy beauty; yet this day I muſt leave thee, with thy child, in the cave. I muſt mix with heroes on Golbun."

And wilt thou leave me, ſaid Graina, lovelieſt of men; wilt thou leave me, thou light of my ſoul in darkneſs? Where is my joy but in the face of Dermid? where is my ſafety but in thy ſhield of braſs? Wilt thou leave me, thou fairer than the ſun when he ſmiles, after the ſhower, on th cleaf of the birch; thou milder than his evening beams, when they play on the down of the mountain? Thy ſon and I will be ſad, if thou art abſent, Dermid.

"Graina, doſt thou not remember the moans of the crane, as we wandered early on the hill of our love *? With pity, thou didſt aſk the aged ſon of the rock, Why ſo ſad was the voice of the crane? 'Too long,' he replied, 'he hath ſtood in the fen; and the ice hath bound his lazy foot.—Let the idle remember the crane, leſt one day they mourn like him.'—Graina, I will not reſt longer here. Fingal might ſay, with a ſigh, 'One of my heroes is become feeble.'—No; king of Morven, the ſoul of Dermid is not a ſtream that will fail; the joyful murmur of its courſe ſhall always attend thy ſteps. Reſt thou in thy cave, my love; with night I will return with the ſpoil of roes.

He went, ſwift as the path of an arrow, when it whiſtles thro' the yielding air on its two gray wings. Graina climbs, penſive and ſlow, the hill, to view the chaſe of roes from her rock. The light of her countenance is mild, but dim; like the moon in the night of calm, when it moves in ſilence through the clouds, and ſeems the

* 'S moch a ghoireas a chorr
Air an lon ata 'n *Slia'gaoil.*

Slia'gaoil, "the hill of love," is ſtill the proper name of a mountain near Kintyre, ſaid to have been the reſidence of theſe lovers, and to have received from them its name.

† The

the darkened ſhield of a ghoſt, hung on high in his own airy hall *! She meets a ſon of age in the woods. Bending, he weeps over a gray ſtone. "Here," he ſaid, "ſleeps the ſpouſe of my love; here, I reared over her the green turf.—Many were our days on the heath. We have ſeen one race, like the leaf of autumn, paſs: we have ſeen another liſt in its place its green head, and grow old. We have turned away our foot from trees, leſt we might cruſh them in youth; and we have ſeen them again decay with years. We have ſeen ſtreams changing their courſe; and nettles growing where feaſted kings. All this while our joy remained; our days were glad. The winter with all its ſnow was warm, and the night with all its clouds was bright. The face of Minalla was a light that never knew a wane; an undecaying beam around my ſteps. But now ſhe ſhines in other lands; when, my love, ſhall I be with thee?

"THERE too, fair maid, thou beholdeſt another tomb. Under it is the cold bed of the ſon of Colla. It was made by the trembling hand of his father. By the boar of the woods my ſon was ſlain. He fell near the cave of his dwelling. His ſpouſe was preparing the feaſt for his return; 'I go,' I ſaid, 'to look for his coming.' I went; I heard his cry; I ran with the ſhort ſteps of age to aſſiſt him. Hanging by my robe, his ſon attends. We find his father dead. The boar had broke his ſpear in twain; and the ſword in his cave was left. His child takes him by the hand, and bids him riſe. 'Why,' he ſaid, 'ſhouldſt thou ſleep without?'—Alas! he hears

* The original word *(Ealachainn taibhſe)* ſignifies properly "the armoury of a ghoſt." The whole compariſon, which is exceedingly beautiful, as well as fanciful, is ſubjoined.

Bha a braghad gu ſeimh a 'ſoilliſe'
Mar ghealach ri oidhche ſhaimhe;
Si gluaſad ro na neula balbha,
Mar ſgia air *ealachainn* taibhſe.

hears thee not; for the tuſk of the boar hath torn him, and his ſleep is heavy.—This morning ſounds Fingal's horn to purſue the fatal boar. But its voice reaches not the ear of Tuthal; the morning that ſhall rouſe my ſon is diſtant. O Tuthal, why hadſt not thou thy father's ſpear?"

"MOURNFUL," ſaid Graina, "is the tale of Colla. My tears in a ſtream could flow on the tombs of thy ſpouſe and ſon. My tears could flow; but I muſt fly with ſpeed. My Dermid purſues the fatal boar; who knoweth, my love, but thou mayſt need a ſpear? Colla, keep thou this child till I return. I fly to my love with a ſtronger ſpear."

DERMID had come to the vale of Cona, like a fair light that grows in darkneſs. We rejoiced in his preſence, as the mariners when the ſtar, that long concealed itſelf in its cloud, looks again on their dark courſe, and ſpreads its beam around. The voice of ſongs is on the deep; and ſeals lift up, through trembling waves, their heads to liſten to the muſic.

WE climb Golbun of green hills, where the branchy horns of deer are ſeen in miſt, and where lie thick the moſſy beds of roes. From echoing rocks we ſtart the boar, the red deadly boar of Golbun. We purſue him with all our dogs; but he leaves them weltering in blood behind.

WHO, ſaid the king, ſhall kill the boar of Golbun; the boar that is red with the blood of heroes; that hath ſlain ſo many of our hounds? His ſhall be a ſpear, the gift of a king; a ſhield with all its ſtuds; and the herbs of the ſecret ſtream, to heal the hero's wounds.

MINE,

MINE, replied Dermid, ſhall be the gift of the king; or I fall by the briſtly foe, and loſe the fame of the ſong.

HE ſpoke, and flew over the heath in the gleam of ſteel. His courſe was like the red cloud that bears the thunder on its wing when the fields of Fingal are ſilent and dark. Quaking heroes lift from Morven their eye, and behold in ſky the fight of ghoſts. It is Trenmor hurling his wrath againſt Lochlin's ſons, when they come to purſue his airy deer.

ALREADY the roar of Dermid is on Benala. From Benala he flies to Benlora. Now the hill of Ledroma ſhakes under his feet; and now the hill of Elda.

THE boar flies before him, but not ſo faſt. His path is marked with wreaths of foam. His noiſe is like the white tumbling of waves on the iſle of ſtorms; like the falling of rocks amidſt the groves of the deſart.—See! they aſcend Drimruath: the ſpear of Dermid almoſt reaches the foe. It falls heavy on its ſides; it marks them with red ſtreams. It ſounds like the fall of trees, with all their aged branches, on a rock. The vales along their winding banks reſound.—But ſee! with fury red-glaring in his eye, he turns, as the ſtream of flames on a hill when the dark winds have changed.—As it were a bulruſh or ſlender reed of Lego, he grinds the hard, tough ſpear of Dermid *.

" O THAT thou wert near me, Graina! that my love would come from her cave, and bring me the ſpear of battle!"

* The original of theſe two lines is a moſt remarkable *echo to the ſenſe*. The one line is full of that harſh, grinding ſound which it deſcribes, and the other as ſmooth as the bulruſh or reed of Lego of which it ſpeaks. The contraſt between them has alſo a fine effect.

Chagnadh e a shleaghan readh ruadh'
Mar chuile na Leige, no mar luachair.

† It

"BRING it I do, my Dermid. From my cave I ſaw thy diſtreſs. Thither again I return. There look for me, my love, when the ſtrife on the hill is over."

AND what though he find thee too, hapleſs maid! Alas! the days of thy years are run.—An arrow in its wandering flight had met the fair in the courſe of the chaſe. In her breaſt of ſnow it is lodged; but ſhe conceals it with her robe from Dermid.—Dear haſt thou paid, O Dermid, for that weapon in thy hand; who ſhall tell thee what it coſt thee?

WITH all his terrible might, the chief lifts his ſpear. Like a meteor of death, red-iſſuing from Lano's cloud, a flood of light, it quick-deſcends. The head is lodged in the rough breaſt of the boar: the ſhaft flies, over trees, through air. His ſword is in the hero's hand; the old companion of his deeds in the hour of danger. Its cold point pierces the heart of the foe:—The boar, with all his blood and foam, is ſtretched on earth †.

WE rejoiced to ſee Dermid ſafe; we rejoiced all, but Connan. Meaſure, ſaid that little ſoul, the boar which thou haſt ſlain. Meaſure him with thy foot bare; a larger hath not been ſeen.

THE foot of Dermid ſlides ſoftly along the grain; no harm hath the hero ſuffered.

MEASURE, ſaid Connan, the boar againſt the grain; and thine, chief of ſpears, ſhall be the boon thou wilt aſk.

THE ſoul of Dermid was a ſtranger to fear; he obeyed again the voice of Connan.—But the briſtly back of Golbun's boar, ſharp as

† It is from this event that the clan of the Campbells, who derive their pedigree from this Dermid, have aſſumed the boar's head for the creſt of their arms. In the compoſitions of the later bards they are often called *Sliochd Dhiarmid an Tuirc*, or, "The race of Dermid who ſlew the boar."

as his arrows and ſtrong as his ſpear, pierces with a thouſand wounds his feet. His blood dyes the ground; it flows in wandering rills through the graſs. The herbs of the mountain are applied; but their virtue fails.—Dermid falls, like a tall pine, on the heath ‡.

Ah! how quick the colour forſakes his cheek. It was red as the fruit that bends the mountain tree *; but now it grows pale as the withered graſs. A dark cloud ſpreads over his countenance, as thick miſts that veil the face of the wintery ſun, when the evening comes before its time.

"The ſhades of night gather on my eyes. I feel the decay of my ſtrength. The tide that flowed in my heart hath ebbed away. Behind it I remain a cold, unmoving rock.—Thou ſhalt know it, Graina, and be ſad; ah! the pain of death is to part with my love.—But the ſhades of the night are gathering over my ſoul. Let Dermid ſleep; his eyes are heavy."

Who ſhall tell it to Graina?—But Graina is nigh. She leans

‡ The death of Dermid, in the manner it is here told, will appear ſomewhat odd. It is probable he had received ſome other wound in a more mortal part; and that ſome of the poem, where his death may have been better accounted for, is loſt. The current tradition with regard to this paſſage is, that Dermid was vulnerable in no part but in the ſole of his foot, and that the great art of Connan was to get him wounded there. Whether this account of the matter, though common, be very old or very ſatisfactory, is a point in which the tranſlator is not concerned.

* In poems chiefly depending on tradition, there muſt be in different editions a conſiderable variation. Their compariſons frequently differ; but they are always beautiful, and have the ſame ſcope. Thus, for inſtance, inſtead of the above ſimile, many have here another of the ſame nature, taken from the ſtrawberry:

Ged' bu deirge do ghruaidh nan t ſubh
Bhiodh air uilin cnuic 's an fheur;
Dh' fhas i nois dui'-neulach uaine,
Mar neul ſuar air neart na grein.'

—Such as may, here, miſs the dialogue concerning *Cuach Fhinn*, or the medicinal cup of Fingal, will remember that it is of ſo different a complexion from the reſt of the poem, that no apology needs be made for rejecting it as the interpolation of ſome later bard.

beneath the ſhade of a tree. She hears the moans of her love: they awake her ſlumbering ſoul. Hark! ſhe pours her faint ſong on the calm breath of the breeze. See! her blood and her tears wander on her white breaſts, like dark ſtreams on the mountains of ſnow.

" My love is fallen! O place me in his bed of earth; at the foot of that rock, which lifts, through aged trees, its ivy head. The ſheeted ſtream, with murmuring grief, ſhall throw its waters over our tomb; but O! let it not wet the dark-brown hair of my love.—The ſtream ſtill murmurs by; ſome day its courſe may waſh away the mound. The hunter, as whiſtling he goes careleſs by, will perceive the bow of Dermid, and ſay, ' This is Dermid's grave.' His ſpouſe perhaps may be with him. Near the bow, ſhe will obſerve this arrow in my breaſt; and ſay, as ſhe wipes her eye, ' Here was Graina laid beſide her love.'—Muſing, they move ſilently along; their thoughts are of the narrow houſe. They look on each other, through gliſtening eyes. ' The fondeſt lovers,' they ſay, ' muſt part at laſt."

—" But ſtop, hunters of the mountain, and give the mighty his praiſe. No mean hunter of a little vale was he, whom you have paſſed, ſo careleſs, by. His fame was great among the heroes of Morven; his arm was ſtrong in their battles. And why ſhould I ſpeak of his beauty; ſhall his comelineſs remain with him in the tomb!—His breaſt was as the down of the mountain, or the ſnow on the tree of the vale, when it waves its head in the ſun.—Red was the cheek, and blue the eye, of my love. Like the graſs of the rock, ſlow-bending in the breeze, were his brows; and ſweeter than the muſic of harps or the ſongs of groves, was thy voice to virgins,

virgins, O Dermid!—But the muſic of thy voice is ceaſed, and my ſpirits can no more be cheered. The burden of my grief is heavy: The ſongs of Morven's bards cannot remove it. It will not liſten to all the larks that ſoar in the lowly vale, when the dewy plains rejoice in the morning ſun of ſummer.—But what hath Graina to do with the ſun of the morning; or what hath Dermid to do with ſummer? When ſhall the ſun riſe in the tomb? When ſhall it be ſummer in the grave, or morning in the narrow houſe? Never ſhall that morning ſhine, that ſhall diſpel our ſlumber, O Dermid *!"

We

* Cha dealruich a mhaidin gu *La bhrath*
A dh'fhogras do phramh, a Shuinn!

The word *la bhrath*, in its literal and primary ſenſe, ſignifies "the day of burning," which was the Druidical term for the diſſolution of the world *by fire*, as *gu dilinn* was their name for the alternate revolution which they ſuppoſed it ſhould undergo *by water*. In a metaphorical ſenſe both words came to denote *never*, or "till the end of the world," which for many ages back has been their only acceptation. Hence, a tranſlator is naturally led to render theſe and the like words by their preſent meaning, without adverting to their etymology or ancient ſignification. This is one reaſon why more religious ideas do not appear in the works of Oſſian, which, if examined, in the original, will be found to contain many alluſions to the Druidical tenets. The word under our preſent conſideration, tho' it is now univerſally underſtood to ſignify *never*, was uſed, long after the introduction of Chriſtianity, to denote the diſſolution of the world by fire, as among the Druids from whom it was borrowed. In that famous prophecy of St Columba, to which his monaſtery owed ſo much of its repute, it has this meaning, *Seachd la' ro an bhrath*, &c. "Seven days before the diſſolution of the world, a flood ſhall cover the other kingdoms, but Iona ſhall ſwim above it." Oſſian, who uſes the word frequently in his poems, probably affixed to it this idea, much oftener than that of *never* as we do at preſent. In the original the word is always more emphatical than can eaſily be expreſſed in a tranſlation. An inſtance or two will make this obvious to ſuch as underſtand both languages. One occurs in the battle of Lora, where Boſmina ſays to Erragon,

"'S nim faicear a d' thalla *gu brath*
Airm agh'or mo dheagh Ri'."

"*Never* ſhall they behold in thy halls the victorious arms of the king."

In the firſt book of Temora, Fingal mourning over the fallen Oſcar, ſays

"Gu *la bhrath* chon eirich Oſcar!"

"*Never more* ſhall Oſcar riſe," is ſcarce ſo emphatical.

We laid the lovely pair in their bed of earth. The ſpear of his ſtrength, with his bow, is beſide Dermid; and with Graina is laid the arrow that was cold in her breaſt. Fingal bended on his ſpear over their grave. A dark ſtream deſcended on his cheek. His bards ſaw his grief. Each aſſumed his harp, and gave the name of the dead to the ſong.—Heroes, mournful, ſtood around. Tears flowed from the eye of hounds, as they reſted on dark-brown ſhields at their feet.

"Peaceful, O Dermid, be thy reſt; calm, ſon of Duino, be thy repoſe, in thy dark and lowly dwelling!—The din of arms is over; the chaſe of the boar is ceaſed; the toil of the day is ended; and thou, heedleſs of the return of the morning, art retired to thy ſlumbering reſt.—The clang of the ſhield, the noiſe of the chace ſhall not awake thee. No; Dermid, thy ſleep is heavy!

"But who can give thy fame to the ſong, thou mighty chief! Thy ſtrength was like the ſtrength of ſtreams in their foam: thy ſpeed like the eagle of Atha, darting on the dun trembling fawn of the deſart. In battle, thy path was like the rapid fall of a mountain ſtream *, when it pours its white torrent over the rock, and ſends abroad its gray miſts upon the wing of winds. The roar of its ſtream is loud through Mora's rocks. Mountain-trees, with all their moſs and earth, are ſwept along, between its arms.—But when it reaches the calm ſea of the vale, its ſtrength is loſt, and the noiſe of its courſe is ſilent. It moves not the withered leaf if the

* The following lines, altho' defective, being only one of the editions from which this paſſage is made up, are ſo beautiful as to deſerve their room:

Bha do neart mar thuilteach uiſge,
Dol oſios a chluoidh do namh;
Ann eabhaig mar iolair nan ſpeur,
No ſteud eiſg a' ruith air ſail'.
A thriath threun a b' aille leadan
Na aon fhleaſgach tha 'ſan Fheinn,
Gu ma ſamhach a raibh t or-chul,
Tuil' chudtrom na foide re!

* In

the eddying wind doth not aid it.—On eddying winds let thy ſpirit be borne, ſon of Duino, to thy fathers; but light let the turf lie over thy beauteous form, and calm in the grave be thy ſlumber!

" A VESSEL rides the ſurgy deep*. It bounds from ridge to ridge. Its white ſails are ſpread to the wind. It braves the fury of the ſtorm.—' It is the ſon of Duino's!'—Yes, ſtranger, it was the ſon of Duino's; but now the ſon of Duino is no more. There, he hovers, a faint form, above; and the boar is half-viewleſs beſide him.

" THE horn ſounds on the mountain. The deer ſtart from the moſs of rocks; from the banks of their ſecret ſtreams. The unerring dart of the hunter purſues them on the heath. One of them is arreſted in the midſt of his courſe. Panting he taſtes the cooling fount. His knees ſhake, like the reedy graſs in the ſtream of winds. He falls as he climbs the bank. His companions attempt with their head to raiſe him, but in vain; they are forced to forſake him and fly.—They fly, but the hunter purſues them. ' His ſpeed is like the ſpeed of Dermid!'—Alas! ſtranger, it is not he. The ſon of Duino ſleeps in his lowly dwelling, and the hunters horn cannot awake him.

" THE foes come on with their gathered hoſt. A mighty ſtream meets them in their courſe. Its torrent ſweeps them back, and overturns their grove of ſpears.—' It is,' ſaith the ſon of the ſtranger, ' one of the warriors of Morven; it is the ſtrength of Dermid!' —The ſtrength of Dermid, replies his companion, hath failed. At

* In this elegy of the bards over Dermid, the various accompliſhments of that hero are remarked; and appear the more ſtriking from their being put, for the moſt part, in the mouth of ſtrangers.

At the foot of that ivy rock I ſaw, as I paſſed, his tomb. The green fern had half-hid the gray ſtone at his head. I pulled its rank growth away: Why ſhouldſt thou, vile weed, I ſaid, obſcure the fame of the hero?

" A YOUTH comes, whiſtling, acroſs the plain. His arms glitter to the ſun as it ſets. His beauty is like that ſinking beam, that ſpreads around him its rays; and his ſtrength is like his beauty. —The virgins are on the green hill above; their robes are like the bow of the ſhower; their hair like the treſſes of the ſun, when they float on the weſtern wave in the ſeaſon of calm. They admire the ſtately beauty of the warrior, as lightly he moves along. —' The youth,' they ſay with a ſigh, ' is like Dermid.'---The memory of the ſon of Duino riſes on their ſoul, as a beam that breaks on blaſted Mora, through the torn edge of a duſky cloud. In ſorrow they bend their heads. The tears ſhine through their ſpreading locks, like ſtars through the wandering hair of the moon. They fall like the tears of Oſſian when they flow for Oſcar of Lego.

" THE children of youth are toſſing their little ſpears. They ſee the hero on the plain. ' There comes Dermid!' Their reedy ſpears are thrown away, and they forſake the ſhield of willow. Their ſteps of joy are quick to meet the maker of their bows. But they ſee it is not he, and in mid-way they ſtop. Slow, they return to their play; but the noiſe of their harmleſs battle is not heard, for their little ſouls are ſad for Dermid.

" THE voice of muſic and the ſound of the harp are heard in Fingal's hall. The benighted traveller is charmed as he approaches. A moment he leans his breaſt upon his ſtaff, and, ſidelong,

long, bends his liſtening ear.---' It is Dermid!' he ſays; and haſtens to overtake the ſong.---A beam of light, clear but terrible, comes acroſs his ſoul. He makes two unequal ſtrides; in the midſt of the third he ſtops. 'Dermid is no more!'---He wipes with the ſkirt of his robe his eye; and, ſighing, ſlowly-walks along.---It is the voice of the bards thou doſt hear, O ſtranger; they are pouring the fame of Dermid on future times; clothing his name with the nightly ſong. The chief himſelf, in Selma thou ſhalt find no more. He ſleeps with Graina in the cold and narrow houſe. On Golbun's heath thou wilt find it, at the ſide of the ſtream of roes.---A rock, dark-bending with its ivy mantle above, ſhelters from ſtorms the place. A mountain-ſtream leaps over it, white, and murmuring travels on. A yew ſpreads its dark-green branches nigh: the deer reſts undiſturbed at noon beneath its ſhade. The mariner leaning to his maſt, as he paſſes on the darkly-rolling wave, points out the place, and tells his mates the woful tale. The tear bedims their eye. They cannot mark the ſpot: they heave the deep note of grief, and ſail to the land of ſtrangers. There, they tell the tale to liſtening crowds around the flame of night. The virgins weep, and the children of youth are mournful. All day they remember Dermid and Graina; and in the dreams of their reſt they are not forgotten."

And often you deſcend to the dreams of Oſſian too, children of beauty. Often you poſſeſs his thoughts, when he ſits, alone, at your tomb; and liſtens if he may hear the ſong of ghoſts. At times, I hear your faint voice in the ſigh of the breeze, when I reſt beneath your green tree, and hang my harp on its low-bending

branch.---But Oſſian is a tree that is withered*. Its branches are blaſted and bare; no green leaf covers its boughs. From its trunk no young ſhoot is ſeen to ſpring. The breeze whiſtles in its gray moſs: the blaſt ſhakes its head of age.---The ſtorm will ſoon overturn it, and ſtrew all its dry branches with thee, O Dermid! and with all the reſt of the mighty dead, in the green winding vale of Cona.

How peaceful art thou, O vale of Cona! Thy warriors and thy hunters are all gone to reſt. Let the bed be alſo made for the bard; for the ſhades of night thicken around him, and his eyes are heavy.

* No image could better repreſent the forlorn condition of the poet than this which he has choſen. The words, too, in which he deſcribes it, are full of that ſoft and mournful ſound which is expreſſed in the Galic by the diphthong *ao*, and the tripthong *aoi;* ſounds which, ſo far as I know, are peculiar to the Galic language, and highly congenial to the more ſoft and mournful feelings.

Tha miſe mar gheig na h aonar,
Si gu moſgain maol gun duileach,
Gun mhaothan ri taobh, no ogan,
Ach oſna bhroin a' caoi' na mullach.
'S fogus ao doinion, a ſgaoilcas
A crionach aoſd' air feadh a ghlinne.
Mu leabaidh Dhiarmaid s nan laoch lughar
Aig Gaothan nan luban uaine.

FINAN

FINAN AND LORMA*:

A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE children of Morven, having given Oſſian a deſcription of two ghoſts which they ſuppoſed they had ſeen in the clouds, are informed of their names;---the manner of their death;---the grief of their father Murno;---the ceremony of his reſigning his arms in old age, when his race became extinct;---with the ſong of the bards on that occaſion;---and the epiſode of Turloch and his children, which had been introduced to comfort Murno and the lover of Lorma.

WHAT is it you behold in the face of night, children of the ſportful days? Is it the ſnow that reſts white on Morven's top; or the gray ſmoke of the halls of air? Do you behold the daughter of night pale in clouds; or is her face ſeen in the calm ſtream in Cona's vale? Hear you the mournful ſpirit of the mountain; or do you liſten to the voice of ghoſts in the gale of winds?

"MORVEN, O bard, is white. The moon is in the ſtream: the ſpirit of the mountain ſpeaks; and the voice of ghoſts is in the gliding gale. But in none of theſe is our thought. Our eye is in

* Often called *Dan chlanna Muirne*, "the ſong of the children of Murno." As the number of names in this poem may render it ſomewhat intricate, eſpecially near the beginning, it may be proper to remember, that Murno was the father of Finan and Lorma; that Ardan was *his* father, Torman his bard, and Dunalva the place of his reſidence.

two clouds; their miſt in moon-beams is white: their ſteps are from Alva of roes; on the wind of night flows their ſtreamy hair. Two dark-gray dogs attend the one. His bow in his dim hand is ſtrung.---From the white ſide of the other runs a coloured ſtream; her long robes ſeem ſtained with blood. Her face is ſad, but lovely; and the tear is ſtill on her cheek.---Keep off, O blaſt, a little while, till we behold the forms.---But thou rolleſt them together in thy dark cloud; and ſcattereſt, like gray ſmoke, their limbs.---Over the ruſhy vale, over the hill of hinds, they wander on the wings of their ruſtling miſt.---Bard of other times, doſt thou know the forms; canſt thou tell the children of Morven their names?"

THE years that are paſt return: the ſoul of Oſſian is full of the ſong. Its voice comes like the ſound of waves; it travels on the evening gale after their force on the diſtant ſhore is broke, and the ſtormy winds are laid.—Children of Murno, I remember your ſong; its ſound has been long from Selma.

CHILDREN of youth, your eyes, like mine, may one day fail. You may aſk the children of the years to come, what they ſee in the face of clouds. "We ſee," they will ſay, "two youthful ghoſts; and beſide them, in his dun cloud, bends their aged father. They will then aſk of you the tale of the ghoſts of night. Liſten to it from Oſſian, leſt you ſhould ſay, "We know not."

WHO comes trembling on the ſtaff of age? His eyes dwell in dark, red-edged clouds: within them is the ſhower of tears. His gray hair is on the gale of winds, and the ſigh of his voice is mournful.—Murno, why ſo ſad? Are not the eyes of Finan flames in battle; lifts he not the ſhield with heroes? Are not the ſteps of Lorma alſo on the hill of roes; bends ſhe not the bow with virgins?

gins? Why then, Murno, is thy face of age ſo ſad; is there no ſound in the harp of Torman?

"Not without cauſe is Murno ſad; not without cauſe is his countenance mournful. Finan! thou lifteſt the ſhield no more in battle. Lorma! thy ſteps are not on the hill of roes with virgins. My children! in the tomb you are both aſleep; and the ſoul of your father is ſad. It is ſad in the midſt of harps, like a cloud of miſt in the valley of the ſun, when the hills expect the ſhower.

"Torman, take that moony ſhield: that ſword which is a ſtream of light; that ſpear, tall as an oak of the vale; and that burniſhed helmet which ſhines ſo bright. They are the arms which Ardan wore: the arms that were worn by the father of Murno. From a chief of other lands he won them, when firſt Trenmor and he, in one day, lifted againſt foes the ſpear. 'Let the firſt of your fields,' ſaid their fathers, 'be marked with fame. From his firſt name grows the renown of the hero *.'—

"They ruſhed to the war of Clutha, like two young eagles of heaven, when they firſt purſue in their ruſhing courſe one young fawn on Dora. Many were the heroes that rolled in duſt before Trenmor; and Ardan won theſe arms from Duthorran. But thy race, O Ardan, ſhall no longer wield them. Only two trees, tall on the banks of Alva, were they! The moſſy branches of one lone tree is bare; and the green youth of another, like the ſhorn flower in the ſun, is withered. The ſon is laid on the tomb, and the father bends over the narrow houſe. The firſt blaſt ſhall lay him low; and the race no more is found.—Torman, hang in Ardan's hall the arms

* This line is a common proverb in Galic, uſed to recommend an early attention to character. *'Se cliu duine a cheud iomra.'*

arms of battle. The feeble in the days to come may ſee them, and admire the race that has failed. They will try to lift the arms, but cannot: 'Mighty,' they will ſay, 'was the race of Alva.'

"Two bards bore to Dunalva the arms, and bade them remain to future times. One ſhield was hung, a darkened moon, on high. Another, with the head of a ſpear, was laid deep in its bed of earth. Nor retired the arms of heroes to their reſt, without their own peaceful ſong.

"DESCEND, ſaid the bards, O Ardan, thou rider of Morven's miſt in the ſtorm; deſcend from thy cloud, and behold thy arms! Let the dim ſmile of joy, between thy tears, ariſe; for thy race brought no ſtain upon the fame of thy ſteel, though now they ſhall no longer lift it. Thy ſpear, in their hand, always ſhone where the battle was darkeſt; but the blood of the feeble was never a dark ſpot on its blue edge. Thy ſhield was a rock, which the lightning of battle often tore: in no feeble hand was it ever lifted. Murno was a ſtorm that tears the oak; and a flame that conſumes the grove was Finan.

"DESCEND, Ardan, from thy miſt; guard the ſhield of thy race in Dunalva †. Let no little ſoul touch it; let no hand of the cruel come nigh it. Such were not the lifters of this ſhield; the bounders on this ſpear; the heroes of the race of Ardan.—Keep off, ſon of the little ſoul; what haſt thou to do with the arms of heroes?

Retire

† It was probably from poetical ſights or antique notions of this nature, that the belief ſprang, which ſtill prevails in the Highlands, of every family-ſeat or houſe of diſtinction being inhabited by one or two *genii*, who are ſuppoſed to ſuperintend the affairs of it, and to puniſh ſervants for their miſdemeanours. What gave ſtill more weight to this opinion, were the corrections frequently beſtowed on ſervants in the dark; the effects of which ſometimes ſhewed, that they did not proceed from ſuch "unreal mockeries."

Retire to thy ſecret ſtream, where was never heard the noiſe of the ſpear, the echo of the battle. There, live with deer; grow gray with the beard of the thiſtle. Sleep in the ſame moſſy bed with them in death; thy fame unſung, thy tomb unknown, thy race unnoticed. One by one, they fall around thy tomb, unheeded; as ferns die in the deep cleft of the rock, where they grow in ſecret. They grow, they decay, they die: no traveller ſhall ever ſay, Behold them!—From the deſart comes a wintery blaſt; on its cloudy wing ſits Death, pale, grim, unlovely. Thouſands are his quivers; and many are his bows, always ſtrung. Through the ſecret vale as he paſſes, he beholds in his bed the lazy man. He draws the ſtring. The arrow ſilent flies. It ſtrikes; it kills; but its mark is not ſeen in the breaſt, like the death that is dealt by the ſteel of the valiant, in the fields of fame. Heroes raiſe over the feeble no tomb: bards ſing no ſong: virgins touch no harp. The little ſoul now hangs in the bowels of cold, dark miſt; like the fiſh locked in the ice of Lano's ſtream; and now, it is toſſed on fenny clouds, the ſport of ruſhing winds. His courſe is often with the vapour of death, that hovers on marſhy lakes, and ſends forth its blaſts, like ſecret arrows, to bring death to nations.—Never are his ſteps on green woody hills, on ſunny plains with heroes *.

" But ſuch were not thy race, Ardan; the lifters of thy brown ſhield in war.—Guard it on high, thou dweller of ſtorms; frighten the feeble when they approach it in thy hall.—But the hall ſhall one

* This paſſage alludes to the notion which the Celtic tribes had of a future ſtate; the puniſhment of which, in their opinion, conſiſted chiefly in thick darkneſs and extreme cold. The utter contempt in which they held ſuch as led an idle and inactive life, appears from their conſigning them to this region of horrors after death

† Be-

one day be no more. Like a gray tree which the blaſt hath overturned in the flood, it ſhall fall; and its top ſhall be wet in the midſt of Alva. The crowded ſtream ſhall change its courſe. Through the ruin is its wandering way. The thorn had been lifting there its flowery head: the brier was green betwixt the moſſy ſtones. The heath and the fern ſhook there, in the breeze of night, their heads, and formed a bed for the dun roes.—The ſtream came. It waſhed away the mound of earth. In the face of the broken bank juts out the dark-cruſted ſhield. The hunter obſerves it, as he bounds over the ſtream in his courſe. 'What dark orb,' he ſays, 'is that; dim as the circle within the new horns of the moon?'—He looſes away, with his ſpear, the earth: his ſoul travels, glad, through the ages that have been. Lifting his head he looks around, and ſees the palace of other years in its own green tomb. 'The dwelling of heroes,' he ſays, 'has been here; the hall of kings in the years that are no more.'—Yes, ſtranger, thou ſtandeſt in the hall of kings: touch not their dark-brown ſhield, if thou art not of the race of heroes. For that was the ſhield of Ardan.—Ardan! thou dweller of the tempeſt's wing, deſcend from thy miſt: deſcend on thy ruſtling blaſt, and receive thy arms.—Guard them in the hall of Dunalva †."

Such was the ſong of the bards, when they hung on high the arms of Murno. But the ſoul of the chief ſtill is ſad. The ſigh of his breaſt is heard, at times, like the ſound of a lonely wave, or the ſigh of the gale in the graſs of the tomb.—We bring him to Selma

† Beſides this ſolemn reſignation of arms made by the laſt perſon of any race to the ghoſts of his fathers or tutelar ſpirits of his family, it appears from ſeveral paſſages in the ancient Galic poetry, that every hero at a certain age was allowed to "hang up his arms in the hall," and decline the toils of battle.

Selma in the ſilence of grief. Two tombs, as we go, lift their green heads before us on the heath. On earth between them Murno lies. None ſaid unto the chief, Ariſe. All lie on the graſs around, and liſten to the mournful tale of his children.

" MORNING roſe on the iſle of Croma, and the horn of my ſon was heard. Three gray dogs leap around him, and lift their ears with joy at the ſound of his quiver. They bound in their ſkiff through the ſtrait, and purſue the dark-brown deer of Croma. With evening we ſee the ſkiff return. The waves ariſe on the deep. The ſkiff is ſeen at times on their white tops: but, ſudden-ſinking, it diſappears. In vain we look for it again; it is concealed in the ſea, or in night.

" MY ſoul trembled for my ſon. But old as I was, what could I do?—I bade the years that were paſt return; but they heard me not. The path of their courſe was diſtant, and the voice of Murno was feeble. My daughter too ſhrieked, and ſhook my aged ſoul, as ſhakes the blaſt the dry leaf of the deſart.—' O my brother! my brother of love! in the ſtorm art thou loſt?—Art thou loſt, my brother!'

" To the ſhore ſhe ruſhed. Diſtracted, wild were her looks. The ſea had ſhrunk from a dark rock. To its tops are the ſteps of the maid. Her looks and her cries are towards the deep. ' My brother, my only brother of love, doſt thou not hear the cry of thy ſiſter?'

" DIM appears a dark ſpot on the foamy top of a wave.—' Is that the wandering ooze; or is it thou, my brother?' He heard her voice; and with one faint note he replied. Fear and joy divide, by turns, her ſoul.—Two of the gray dogs had reached the ſhore:

the third, in the foam of waves, was loſt. The two heard the voice of Finan fail. They bound again into the ſurgy deep. They return, with Finan, on the third wave; but one breathes on the beach his laſt.

" LORMA bore her brother to the rock. ' Here,' he faintly ſaid, ' Let me for a little reſt, for my ſtrength is failed.'

" SHE wrapt her robe about his breaſt, and made his pillow of the weeds that were drieſt.

" HE ſleeps. The maid in ſilence bends over his face. She bids the waves be ſtill, and the noiſy path of their whales be diſtant. And diſtant be your ruſtling courſe, ye winds of the mountain; and ſoft be your gliding, ye ſtreams from the vale of hinds. Quiet, through the boſom of woods, be the noiſe of your torrents: and ſilent, through ruſtling leaves, be your ſteps, ye dun-bounding roes. Let my brother of love ſleep, for his eyes are heavy. Soft, Finan, on the dark rock be thy ſleep; calm, my brother of love, be thy ſlumbers.

" BUT, ah me! his face is pale; it is wan, as the moon in her gray watery cloud. The countenance of my brother is unlovely. Perhaps he ſtill dreams of the troubled deep; for his brow is dark. It is clouded as the face of children in their unſettled reſt, when their dreams are of the coming of wolves †.— Mothers of the tender ſoul, do you then awake your children from their ſlumbers? Do you bid their ſleep depart, and ſcatter, as miſt on

† Mar ghnuis leinibh, 's e'n ſuain gun ſhois,
A bruadar air maddai' nan coikean.

Some have quarrelled with Oſſian for not making mention of the wolf, ſo frequent at that time in his country. But theſe gentlemen ought to remember, that a great part of Oſſian's works is loſt, in which mention may have been frequently made of this and many other things which we now deſiderate.

on the gale, the fear of their dreams? Yes, you do awake them: but I will not awake my brother of love till the morning come, for his ſtrength is failed; his ſleep is heavy.—But the flies of night diſturb thee, Finan. How ſhall I keep them away? Thy face, with my own, I'll ſoftly cover; but I will not diſpel thy ſlumber. —Ah! my brother, thou art cold.—Thou haſt no breath—thou art dead! my brother! O my brother!

" Her cries aſcend on the rock. As I approach they ſtrike my ear. The ſea grows, and ſhe perceives it not. She loads with her cries the wind. The beating on her white breaſt is loud; the howling of the gray dog is wild. My ſoul melts on the ſhore with grief. Often it bade me ruſh to the relief of my child. But the voice within me ſaid, ' Murno, thou art old and feeble; the days of thy cleaving the deep are over.'

" The gathering wave lifts my children from the rock: it toſſes them on its breaſt to the ſhore. There dark rocks meet them with their force, and the ſide of Lorma is torn. Her blood tinges the wave: her ſoul is on the ſame blaſt with Finan.

" Sad, O my children, have you left your father: the name of parent I will hear no more. I ſtand on the heath, a blaſted oak; no more ſhall my branches flouriſh. Autumn is dark on the plain. The trees are bare on the brown heath. Their leaves with the ſpring ſhall return; but no green leaf of mine ſhall lift, in the ſummer-ſhower, its head. The race of Alva is failed, like the blue ſmoke of its halls when the beam of the oak is decayed.— Great is the cauſe of Murno's grief; for one night hath ſeen him without a child. Thy tomb, O Finan, is here; and here thy grave, O Lorma!"

THE ſoul of the aged was ſad. The burſt of his grief ſtill aroſe. We remain ſilent in our place, like ghoſts when the winds are calm; like a ſtream of ice when it ſleeps between two banks of ſnow, and ſhews to the pale moon its glittering beard.

BUT who comes, wandering, wild on the mountains, like the roe that hath loſt his companion among the woody ſtreams. His yellow hair wanders on the dark breath of winds. Unequal are his ſteps. Frequent the burſt of his grief: the ſigh of his breaſt is mournful. It is like the voice of a blaſt in a cave, when the waves, before it, toſs themſelves in a ſtorm.—It is Uran, the bender of the bow; the love of thy youth, O Lorma! He had come to Dunalva in the night of ſtorms: but the halls were ſilent and dark. Two blue ſtars had uſed to ſhine there. But now he ſaw them not; ſet were the eyes of Lorma.

"LORMA, where doſt thou reſt? My love, where are thy ſlumbers? Has the night ſeized thee in the lonely chaſe; has darkneſs hid thy ſteps in the deſart? Daughter of the bow, where doſt thou reſt? O that I knew thy place; then ſhould I haſte to find thee! Doſt thou ſleep at the foot of a gray rock; is thy bed of moſs on the bank of ſtreams? Ah me! if it is, the breaſts of my love will be wet: they will be wet, and the night is cold.—It is cold: but peaceful be thy reſt, dweller of the ſoul of Uran; let thy dreams of me be lovely.—

—"DISTURB her not, ye ſpirits of the night on your blaſts; ruffle not her hair, ye winds; blow not away that ſmile on the lips of my love.—My love is calm in the midſt of ſtorms; for the thoughts of her ſoul in the ſeaſon of reſt is Uran.—Glide ſmoothly by her, ye ſtreams of the valley of rocs: ſkip quietly, ye dun ſons

of

of the mountain, through your buſh. Eagles of the hill of hinds, let the ruſtling of your wings, in the deſart, be diſtant. See that ye diſturb not the dreams of my love; that ye awake not the ſlumbers of Lorma.—Sleep on, O Lorma; let not the murmur of the ſtream, nor the ruſtling of the ſtorm in trees, affright thee. Sleep on; with morning, I will come and awake thee. I will awake thee, but my voice will be ſoft. It will riſe in thy ear like the hum of the mountain bee, when he travels on the wing of the breeze at a diſtance. The voice is loſt at times: the brown ſon of the wing is drinking the dew of roſes, where they grow on their ſecret banks.—Sleep on, O Lorma; and if the ſlumber of night deſcends on the ſoul of Uran, riſe thou in the dream of his reſt, and let the look of thy eye be lovely!"

He reſted on the moſſy bank. Sleep half-deſcended on his ſoul. The murmur of Alva in his ear was leſs. The moon ſtill looked through the windows of his reſt; for only by halves were his eye-lids cloſed.—Before him twice aroſe the ſighing Lorma. She was like a white cloud before the moon, when her light is dim, and her countenance ſad. Uran knew the ghoſt of his love. He wandered, mournful, wild on the heath. The voice of Murno reached his ear: he perceived the two green mounds of earth. He dropped the bow. He fell. But why ſhould I tell the grief of Uran?—Silence was long on the hill. The bard of Morven, at length, took the harp. We leaned forward our breaſts upon its ſound, and liſtened, as he ſung with the voice of grief.

"Turloch lived at Lubar of ſtreams. In deeds of fame his hair grew white. Strangers knew the way to his hall: in the broad path there grew no mountain-graſs. No door had he to his

gate.

gate. ‘ Why,’ he ſaid, ‘ ſhould the wanderer ſee it ſhut?’ Turloch was tall as the oak of his vale. On either ſide, a fair branch lifted its green-growing head. Two green trees ſmiling in the ſhower, and looking through rainbows on the ſun, were the two children of Turloch. Heroes admired the beauty of Migul; and virgins, with ſecret pleaſure, beheld the ſteps of Althos. ‘ He is ſtately,’ ſaid the ſtrangers, ‘ as the ſon of Turloch; and ſhe is fair,’ they ſaid, ‘ as the maid at Lubar’s rolling waters.’

“ Long did the years of Turloch glide ſmoothly by. Their ſteps were ſilent as the ſtream of his vale. Joy ſmiled in the face of the chief, like the ſun-beams on the brow of his hill, when no cloud travels in the road of heaven *.

—“ But ever-varying, as the face of the ſky, are the days of man upon his mountains. The ſtorm and the calm roll there in their courſe; the light and the ſhade, by turns, are there.

“ Migul one day went forth to the chaſe. In her white hand was the bended bow; and two gray dogs bounded, through the morning dew, in her ſteps. Swift as miſts that fly through heaven when the winds are high, they purſued on hills the deer. Migul drew the ſtring. Her winged darts were unerring as death. On the brown heath the ſons of the mountain, gaſping, fell.

“ The huntreſs ſits on her rock. The thunder is heard on the hill. The clouds gather like night. The ſtreams deſcending from the

* Where different images are uſed in the different editions of the original, they are often joined in the tranſlation, when the ſenſe and poetry admit of it. In other places, however, ſome of the original is omitted, as here, where a part of the paſſage ſeems to be borrowed from an encomium of Oſſian upon his beloved Oſcar in another poem.

Bha do chroidhe mar ghathaibh greine
S do ſpiorad mar chanach ſleibhe
Be do nos bhi aoibheil failteach
Mar na roſaibh air gach faire.

the mountains are white, and Lubar rolls in foam. How ſhalt thou croſs it to thy home, thou trembling maid?

" Althos ſaw his ſiſter approach. He knew where two bending rocks almoſt met above the ſtream. An aged oak ſpreads its arm acroſs: often had the trembling hunters of other times crept along its moſs in the day of ſtorm. Here ſtood Althos, above the deep. ' Give me, my ſiſter, thy hand.'—Both ſhake upon the bending branch: it quakes; it cracks; it breaks; it falls!

" Turloch was kindling the fire in his hall. My daughter from the hill, he ſaid, is wet.

" A cry ſtrikes his ear, as he fans the flame. Sudden-ſtarting, he iſſues forth. He ſees his two children ſhoot along the ſtream; they are clung to one aged branch.

" He cried; but his cries were vain. Night, deſcending on the vale was dark. The rocks till morning heard his moan; and deer, awaking at the ſound, leapt wildly from Lubar's banks.—Day found him wandering there; and night again overtook him in the ſame place. But his children at the dark ſtream he found not; and ſad he returned to his empty houſe. Long did it echo to his ſighs; and long did he wander at the dark ſtream, when the children of the vale had retired to reſt.

" The ſhield of battle, at length, was ſtruck. Turloch heard, as he wept on Lubar's banks, the ſound. He ſailed with his people to Ialin; but they landed, as they paſſed, in Ithulmo.—There, two lovely beams met them on the rock; benders of the bow, when bounds before them the dun roe. The eye of Turloch darkened with grief as he beheld their beauty, in the midſt of the children of the iſle.—' Two ſuch lovely beams were you once in my ſight, my chil-

children! Such was thy ſtatelineſs, O Althos! and ſuch thy beauty, O Migul!'

"THEY heard the voice of their father, on the iſle to which they were borne, by the oak, on the wing of ſtreams. They heard it, and ſprang to his arms with joy.—The face of the aged again was bright; and gladneſs returned to Lubar."

"THY children, O Murno," added the voice of age*, "are, like thoſe of Turloch, only loſt for a ſeaſon. They are only gone before thee on their own ſtream to the land of the happy. There thou ſhalt ſoon behold them lovely, lifting their young heads in the midſt of heroes. Already, their courſe is in the fair miſts that wander on the face of the moon; when ſhe looks pale through clouds, and ſhines in the ſtream of Alva. Let, therefore, the grief of Uran be forgot, for there he will find his Lorma. Let the tear of the red eye of Murno be wiped off, for there he will find his children."

THE grief of the mourners calmed by degrees. Uran was like a tree, which, though the ſtorm is laid, ſtill ſhakes its waving head: and the boſom of Murno ſtill heaved above the ſigh; like waves which toſs themſelves, at times, after the winds have retired.

CATH-

* The original of this paſſage is beautiful, and deſerves here a place. The tranſlation may appear ſomewhat fuller in one or two of the expreſſions, owing, here and in ſome other places, either to the abruptneſs of the original, or to the admiſſion of an epithet or idea ſomewhat differently expreſſed in other editions. Such as will take the trouble of comparing any of the other Galic paſſages with the Engliſh, will pleaſe extend this remark to them alſo: it will account for a few inconſiderable variations which they may meet with.

Is amhuil ſin air an ſruthai' ſein
Dh'imich, re ſeal, clanna Muirne;
Ach gheibhear iad ann Innſe nan Treun,
Mar iurain aoibhin 's an doire uaine.
Cheana chitear an caoin-chruth
A' ſnamh doilleir ſeach Gealach na h oidhche,
Tra ſheallas i nuas fui' ſmal
Air Alva nan ceime ciuine.
Caiſg, Urain, mata do bhron,
Sna biodh do dhroins', a Mhuirne, co ſnitheach;
Sgach aon, air a ſteud ſhruth ſein,
Ann deigh's a chairdean ag im'eachd.

CATHLUINA:

A POEM*.

THE ARGUMENT.

ANNIR, the daughter of Moran, having been loved by two intimate friends, Gaul and Garno, reſolved to get rid of the laſt by a ſtratagem.---In the diſguiſe of a ſtranger, ſhe brought him a challenge from Duaran, who, ſhe alleged, was his rival, and whoſe prowefs ſhe thought he would not chooſe to encounter. But being diſappointed in this, and reſolved to get rid of Garno at any rate, ſhe delivers the ſame meſſage to Gaul, confident that his ſuperior valour would give him the victory.---The two friends met in the night, and fell by mutual wounds. The iſſue of her plot affected Annir ſo much, that ſhe could not long ſurvive it.---The poem opens with ſome reflections ſuggeſted by the ſcene where they were all buried, and concludes with their funeral ſong.

I HEAR the murmur of the brook; I hear its fall over the rock. Lead me, ſon of youth, to that oak which ſpreads its branches over the ſtream. At its foot, three gray ſtones lift through withered graſs their heads, and meet the falling leaves. There ſleep the friends of Oſſian. The murmuring ſtream they hear not: the ruſtling leaves they heed not. In the chamber of their reſt, the ſteps of our approach will not diſturb them.

* In the diſtrict of Lorn in Argyleſhire, there is a lake which is now called Loch-avich, but anciently Loch-luina, or Lochluana. Near it was probably the ſcene of this poem. Many places in its neighbourhood are ſtill denominated from Oſſian's heroes.

The *ſon of youth*, to whom this piece is addreſſed, is ſuppoſed to be the ſame with the *ſon of Alpin*, ſo often mentioned in ſome other ancient poems. Tradition relates many ſtories of him; among others, that he took down in writing all the poems of Oſſian as they had been repeated to him by that old and venerable bard.

MANY, ſon of youth, were the valiant on the hills of Morven, in the days of our joy. But the blaſt came and ſpoiled our wood of its leaves. It overturned our lofty pines on their green mountains. It whiſtled with its wintery noiſe through our palaces, and marked its dark path with death. The ſeaſon of our joy is a ſun-beam that is paſt; the voice of gladneſs in our hall is a ſong that hath ceaſed; and the ſtrength of our heroes is a ſtream that is no more. The owl dwells in our fallen walls, and the deer graze on the tombs of the valiant. The ſtranger comes from afar to beg the aid of the king. He ſees his halls, and wonders they are deſolate. The cow-herd, careleſs, whiſtling, meets him on the duſky heath, and tells him the heroes are no more. "Whither," he ſays, "are the friends of the feeble gone; and where is Fingal, the ſhield of the unhappy?"—They are gone, O ſtranger, to their fathers. The blaſt hath laid the mighty, like the tall pines of Dora, low; and the ſons of the feeble grow in their place. Thou ſeeſt on every hill the tombs of thoſe who helped the unhappy. Thou ſeeſt their ſtones half-ſunk, amidſt the rank ruſtling graſs of the vale. The heroes have made their bed in duſt; and ſilence, like miſt, is ſpread on Morven.

BUT the voice of Cona's harp, ye mighty dead, ſhall be heard in your praiſe. The ſtranger, as he paſſes, may attend perhaps to the ſong. Liſtening on his ſpear, at times, he ſtands. The bard ſees him not, but his ſighs are often heard. Humming the tale he goes away, and, mournful, tells it at the ſtreams of his land. Young bards ſhall hear it as they bend, ſilent, over their liſtening harps. On future times they will pour the ſong.

WE are come to the place; but where are the ſtones that mark the

the abode of my friends? Lift your heads, ye gray moſſy ſtones; lift your heads, and tell whoſe memory you preſerve. Why ſhrink you in your moſs, forgetful of the mighty below you?—But I will not forget you, companions of my youth. Your fame ſhall remain in my ſong, when theſe mouldering ſtones ſhall fail.—Often did we ſhine together in ſteel, and pour death on fields, like roaring ſtreams. Mighty were ye then, my friends, though now ſo low! Mighty were your deeds when you ſtrove together here. Liſten to the tale, ſon of youth, and let thy ſoul be kindled to deeds of fame.

GAUL * and Garno were the terrors of the plain: their fame was in the land of ſtrangers. The ſtrength of their arms was unmatched, and their ſouls were ſteel. They came to the aid of Moran. They went to the hall of the chief, where it lifts its gray head, in the midſt of trees, in the green iſle of Inniſluina.—The daughter of Moran ſeized the harp, and her voice of muſic praiſed the ſtrangers. Their ſouls melted at the ſong, like a wreath of ſnow before the eye of the ſun. The heroes burned with equal love to Annir; but it was on Gaul alone that ſhe rolled her blue eye. Her ſoul beheld him in the dreams of her reſt; and the ſtreams of Inniſluina heard, in ſecret, his name.—The daughter of Moran turned away her eye from the brow of Garno; for ſhe often ſaw the fire of his wrath ariſe, like a dark flame when clouds of ſmoke ſurround it.

THREE days the heroes feaſted. On the fourth they purſued the chaſe on the heath of Luina. The maid followed at a diſtance, like

* Who this Gaul was is not certain. He is probably the ſame with him who ſpeaks in that dialogue often foiſted into the poem of Gaul the ſon of Morni, and beginning with

A righbhin is binne ceol,
Gluais gu malda 's na gabh bron, &c.

a youth from the land of ſtrangers. She followed to tell the words of fear, that Garno might leave the land *.

The ſun looked down on the fields, from beyond the midſt of his courſe, and the panting roes ſtill lay in the ſhade of the rock. Garno ſat on Caba's rugged top. His quiver is by his ſide, and Luchos lies at his feet. Beſide him is the bow with the head of horn, unſtrung. He looks round for the deer; he ſees a youth. "Whence are thy ſteps," ſaid the dark-brow'd chief; "and where is the place to which thou art bound?"—

"I am," replied the youth, "from the mighty Duaran, chief of the halls of Comara. He loves the daughter of Moran; but he heard that Garno wooed his love. He heard it, and ſent me to bid thee yield the fair; or feel, this night, the ſtrength of his arm in battle."

"Tell that proud ſon of the ſea, that Garno will never yield. My arm is ſtrong as the oak of Malla, and my ſteel knows the road through the breaſt of heroes. To Gaul alone, of all the youths on the hill, I yield the right-hand in battle, ſince he ſlew the boar that broke my ſpear on Elda.—Bid Duaran fly to his land: bid him retire from the daughter of Moran."

"But thou haſt not ſeen Duaran," ſaid the youth. "His ſtature is like an oak; his ſtrength as the thunder that rolls thro' heaven; and his ſword as the lightning that blaſts the affrighted groves. Fly to thy land, leſt it leave thy withered branches low, and ſtrew on the heath thy blue arms."

"Fly thou, and tell Duaran I meet him.—Ferarma, bring me my ſhield

* For moſt of this and the two following paragraphs, we are more indebted to the tale than to the poem, which is defective.

ſhield and ſpear: bring me my ſword, that ſtream of light.—What mean theſe two angry ghoſts that fight in air!—The thin blood runs down their robes of miſt; and their half-formed ſwords, like faint meteors, fall on ſky-blue ſhields.—Now they embrace like friends. The ſweeping blaſt paſſes through their airy limbs. They vaniſh. I do not love the ſign; but I do not fear it. Fe-rarma, bring my arms."

THE maid retires. She is grieved that Garno will not fly. But ſhe heard him ſay that to Gaul he yielded in battle. To the hill of his chaſe are therefore her ſteps.—The hero leans on his ſpear: a branchy deer lies by his ſide, and his dogs are panting around. His looks are towards the green dwelling of Luina. His thoughts are of his lovely Annir; and his voice is heard in her praiſe.

"FAIR is my love as the bow of heaven: her robe is like the beam of the morning. Mild is the bluſhing of thy face, O Annir, as that ſun, when he looks through the red-tinged clouds of the weſt, and the green tops of the mountains ſmile. O that I ſaw thee on the hill of deer, in all thy beauty; that I ſaw thee like the young pine in the vale of Luina, when it ſoftly waves its head in the gale, and its glittering leaves grow in the ſhower of the ſun!—Then would my ſoul rejoice as the roe, when he bounds over the heath in his ſpeed; for lovely art thou in the eye of Gaul, thou daughter of car-borne * Moran!"

"AND

* Ait mar eilid an aonaich,
Na deann air raon nan rua 'bhoc,
Tha m' anam fein, tra chi mi do dhreach,
Inghean Mhorain nan each 's nan *carbad*.

Car-borne is always a title of diſtinction in the poems of Oſſian. That the ancient Britons and Caledonians uſed cars and chariots of various kinds, is a fact ſo well atteſted by Tacitus, Mela, Cæſar, and other authors of credit, that none has room to aſk, Where could they drive them? Their chariots of war were generally armed with ſcythes, and called *cobh'ain*,

"AND art thou Gaul," ſaid the approaching youth? "Thy Annir may be lovely, ſon of Ardan; but dire is the battle thou muſt fight. Duaran loves the maid: on that hill he awaits thy coming. Yield, Gaul, thy love to Duaran."

"MY love I will yield to none. But tell thou that chief to come to the feaſt to-night. To-morrow he ſhall carry away the gift of a friend, or feel the ſtrength of a foe."

"THOU mayſt ſpread the feaſt but thou muſt eat it alone, for Duaran comes only to lift the ſpear. Already I ſee his diſtant ſteps. He ſtalks like a ghoſt on that duſky heath. The beam of his ſteel ſupplies the departing light; and the clouds brighten their dark-brown ſides around him. Hark! he ſtrikes his ſhield. Its ſound is the death of heroes."

GAUL covered himſelf with his arms, like a ghoſt that clothes his dark limbs with meteors of light, when the mountain-heads are ſhaking in thunder. He moved to the hill from which he heard the ſign of battle. As he went he hummed a careleſs ſong. He thought of his Annir, and the deeds of his former days.

HERE, ſon of youth, the warriors met. Each thought his foe was Duaran: for night was dark on the hills, and this oak concealed the ſky. Dreadful was the wrath of the heroes; dreadful was

cobh'ain, (the *covinus* of the Latin writers), from *co-bhuain*, a word which ſignifies "to hew down on all ſides." Of this kind ſeems to have been the famous car of Cuthullin in the 1ſt B. of Fingal, and the 4000 which Cæſar aſcribes to Caſſibelanus.—Beſides this, the ancient Caledonians, as they inhabited a mountainous and uneven country, uſed for ſtate a ſort of litter borne between two horſes in a line, and ſomewhat in the ſhape of a bier. Hence, in Galic, the word *carbad* is uſed either to denote "a bier" or "a chariot."

was the echo of their ſwords, as they mixed on high, like ſtreams of lightning, when they iſſue from dark clouds of many folds *. The hills reply to their ſhields. Luina trembles, with all its woods. The heath ſhakes its head; the roes are afraid in their dreams; they think the chaſe is already up, and the thought of their ſleep is of danger.—Still louder grows the noiſe in their ear; they think the approach of the hounds and the twang of the bow are nearer. From their midnight ſlumber they ſtart; their face is towards the deſart.

TERRIBLE and long was the ſtrife of battle.—But the ſhield of Gaul is cleft in twain: and the blade of Garno flies in broken pieces. Its ſound is like the whirlwind on Ardven, when it tears the heath from its roots, and ruſtles through the leafy oak.

GAUL ſtands like a whale, which the blue waves have left bare upon a rock. Garno, like the return of a ſtormy wave, ruſhes on to graſp the chief. Around each other they claſp their ſinewy arms; like two contending ſpirits of heaven, when all the ſtorms are awake. The rocking hills ſhrink with fear from the thunder of the ſons of the ſky; and the groves are blaſted with their lightning.—Thus from ſide to ſide the warriors bound. Rocks with their earth and moſs fly from their heels. Blood, mixt with ſweat, deſcends in ſtreams to the ground. It wanders through the green graſs, and dyes the paſſing rill.

ALL

* Another edition of the poem deſcribes this combat ſomewhat differently, but with almoſt equal energy, in the following lines;

Bhuail iad ann ſin air a cheile,
Gu cruaidh cuidreach is do-bheumach,
Chaidh an leirg air ehrith fui'n caſaibh,
'S chaidh teine da'n armaibh glaſa.
Bhuaileadh iad gu neart'ar dobhidh
Mar dha-bhuinne ri cruaidh cho'rag.
Cho-fhreagair na creagan 'ſna beanntai'
Do airm nan Curine calma.

ALL night they fought. With morning light the ſon of Ardan falls on earth, and his wide wound is expoſed to day. The helmet falls from his face. Garno knows his friend. Speechleſs and pale he ſtands, like the blaſted oak, which the lightning ſtruck on Mora in other years. The broad wound in his own breaſt is forgot. The red current flows unperceived. He falls beſide his friend.

" BLESSED," he ſaid, " be the hand that gave the wound! My body, O Gaul, ſhall reſt with thine, and our ſouls ſhall ride on the ſame fair-ſkirted cloud. Our fathers ſee us come: they open the broad gate of miſt: they bend to hail their ſons, and a thouſand other ſpirits are in their courſe. We come, mighty ghoſts; but aſk not how your children fell. Why ſhould you know that we fought, as if we had been foes? Enough that you know your ſons were brave. But why have we fought together; why have I heard the name of Duaran?"

GAUL heard the voice of his friend. But the ſhades of death are on his eyes: they ſee but dimly half the light. " Why did I fight," he faintly ſaid, " with Garno; why did I wound my friend; why did I hear of Duaran? O that Annir were near to raiſe the gray-ſtone of my tomb!—Bend down, my fathers, from your airy halls, to meet me!" His words were heard no more. Cold and pale in his blood he ſunk.

ANNIR came. Trembling were her ſteps: wild were her looks: diſtracted were her words. " Why fled not Garno? why fell my Gaul? Why was heard the name of Duaran?" The bow dropped from her hand: the ſhield fell from her breaſt. Garno ſaw her, but turned away his eye. In ſilence he fell aſleep.—She came

came to her lovely Gaul. She fell upon his clay-cold corſe. There the fair, unhappy mourner was found; but ſhe would not be torn from her love.

All day, the ſun, as he travelled through his watery cloud, beheld her grief. All night, the ghoſts of rocks faintly anſwered to her ſigh. On the ſecond day her eyes were cloſed. Death came, like the calm cloud of ſleep, when the hunter is tired upon his hill, and the ſilence of miſt, without any wind, is around him.

Two days the father of Annir looked towards the heath: two ſleepleſs nights he liſtened to all the winds. "Give me," on this morning he ſaid, "my ſtaff. My ſteps will be towards the deſart." —A gray dog howls before him: a fair ghoſt hovers on the heath. The aged lifts his tearful eye; mournful he ſpies the lovely form. —But, Moran, I will leave thee; I cannot ſtay to behold thy grief †.

* * * * * * * * * *

Here, ſon of youth, we laid the three. Here we reared their gray ſtones. Our ſorrow was great for their fall; and our bards gave the mournful ſong.

"Who, from the duſky hill with his armour of light; who ſtalks ſo ſtately over the plain; who ſtrides in terrors over the heath; who ruſhes into danger and defies the brave? Who is it but Garno the bold; Garno of the awful brow: the chief of ſpears; the terror of the field; the ſtrength of a thouſand ſtreams?

"But who meets him, with ſtately ſteps and yellow locks? Like

† Some editions enlarge here upon Moran's extreme grief on learning the death of his daughter; but as the paſſage, though very tender, appears either to be not genuine, or not correct, it is omitted.

the ſun, when he looks through a thin watery cloud, he ſmiles in the hour of danger. Who rolls before him the ſtorm of battle, and thunders through its wide-ſkirted fields?—Hark! his voice is the ſound of waves in a ſtorm; his ſteps like the ſhattered rocks, when hills ſhake their heads on the heath of the deſart.—It is Gaul of the fair hair and mild look; the ſon of Ardan of renowned deeds: the chief is mighty, but lovely.—O why was the name of Duaran ever heard, or the maid of Luina ever loved? Why fought two ſuch friends in darkneſs?—Like angry ghoſts in a ſtorm, ye fought; like two green oaks, laid low by the ſtorm of angry ghoſts, ye fell.—The traveller paſſed by in the night; he ſaw them raiſe their lofty heads in the plain. 'Fair trees,' he ſaid, 'your growth is ſtately, and your leaf, on the bank of your own blue ſtream, is lovely!'—But he returns in the morning, and finds their green heads low; he ſees their roots torn from the earth, and their branches in the foam of the ſtream.—The tear ſtarts into his eye. 'Each of us,' he ſays, 'will one day fall before the ſtorm.'

"Low are your heads beneath the ſtorm of night, ye warriors who were lately ſo brave! And pale is thy beauty, lovely Annir, in the place of thy ſilent repoſe! Mark, O maids of Morven's ſtreams, the day whereon the lovers fell. Let it be a day of ſadneſs on Luina. Let no youth, on that day, purſue the dark-brown deer.

"O GARNO, warrior bold! Gaul, thou lovely hero! and Annir, fair and unhappy!—Whether you ride on the ſilent clouds, or turn the courſe of the tempeſt; whether you reſt in the peaceful halls of your fathers; viſit the cloud-robed hills of Morven, or haunt the

the green groves of Luina:—O let your love, your grief, and your wounds, be forgot; and liſten with joy to your fame in the ſong.—While harps remain, they will repeat your name; and the laſt voice of bards ſhall praiſe you."

SUCH was the ſong of the bards when we reared the tomb of the heroes. Often I ſung it in our halls, when the dark day of their fall returned.

I HEAR the murmuring of the brook: I hear its fall over the rock: lead me back, ſon of youth, but forget not the fame of the heroes.

CATHULA*:

A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

CATHULA king of Iniſtore, having invited Fingal to a feaſt in his palace of Carricthura, receives intelligence, at the time, of an intended invaſion on his coaſt. Fingal removes his anxiety on that head, by reminding him of the fame of their fathers; which they would tranſmit, he ſaid, to their children. Upon this Cathula laments his misfortune, in having loſt, as he ſuppoſed, his only ſon, when a child. The bard relates in what manner; and Fingal comforts Cathula, by telling him his ſon may, poſſibly, be ſtill alive.—

BEING informed in the morning, that MANOS, a chief of Lochlin, had actually landed, they go forth to give him battle. The command is devolved upon three of their young warriors; but as they were like to be worſted, Fingal, Connal, and Cathula deſcend to their aid. The laſt, with ſome miſgivings, encounters with a youth, whom he afterwards diſcovers to be his ſon.—

MANOS, being overcome, is reprimanded by Fingal, and diſmiſſed on a promiſe of his never giving any further trouble to Fingal or any of his friends.—The poem is addreſſed to a *Dweller of the rock*; either a ſequeſtered Culdee, or Druid.

OUR life is like the ſun-beam of winter, that flies, between the ſhowers, over the heath of Lena. The hunter, lifting his head upon his hill, beholds the beam, and hails the day of the ſun. He

* From the reſemblance between the names of Cathula and Cuthullin, and both having a ſon called Conloch, many who repeat this poem, in place of Cathula, ſubſtitute the more familiar name of Cuthullin, and call the poem by the title of "Mar mharbh Cuthullin a Mhac:"—tho' it appears that Cuthullin died under the age of thirty, when his ſon was very young; and the other circumſtances of the poem can relate only to the king of Iniſtore.—See Oſſian's poems of *Carricthura* and *Death of Cuthullin*. The edition here followed begins thus:

Mar-

He hails it; but it is already gone. The dun-robed clouds have drawn their ſhade over its path, and who can trace its footſteps? The leafleſs woods lament its departure; their branches ſigh to every breeze; and the drooping herbs of the mountain wither.

The ſun, O woods, ſhall again return; and your green leaves, in his warm beam, will flouriſh. The ſeaſon of your youth will come back, and all your bare boughs will rejoice. From the height of his beauty, the dweller of heaven will look down: he will ſmile through the thin ſparkling ſhower, on the herbs that are withered. They alſo will come forth from their winter-houſe, and lift their green glittering head on the bank of their ſecret ſtream.—They will come forth from their dark houſe, with joy: but the dwellers of the tomb remain ſtill in their place; no warm beam of the ſun ſhall revive them.—But your memory, companions of my fame, ſhall remain; your deeds ſhall deſcend, a beam of light to future times, and be the tale of the years that ſhall come.—Hear, dweller of the rock, the tale of Iniſtore. Dim-gleaming, it comes on the ſoul of the bard. It comes like a faint moon-beam on the diſtant wave, when Lumon † fears the ſtorm.

The feaſt of Cathula was prepared, and Fingal raiſed the ſail. The wind came down with its ruſhing noiſe from our mountains. Beneath its ſteps is the groan of oaks. On the deep is the roar of waves.

Mar bhoisge greine 's a gheamhra'
'S e ruith na dheann air raon Lea'na;
'S amhuil ſin la'ith nam Fiann
Mar ghrian eidir-fhraſach a' treigſin.
Dh'aom neoil chiar-dhu' nan ſpeur,
'S bhuin iad an deo aoibhin on t ſealgair:
Tha loma-gheuga na coill a' caoidh,
'S mao' luſrach an t ſleibh a' ſearga'
Ach pillidh fathaſd a ghrian
Ri doirre ſgiamhach nan geug ur,
'Sni gach crann 'sa cheituin gaire
'G amhare ann aird ri mac nan ſpeur, &c.

As ſeveral parts of this poem are ſupplied from the tale or *ſgeulachd*, the narration is more prolix than it is in the general run of old Galic poems.

† Lumon; the name of a bay.

waves. Iniſtore ‡, dweller of the ſea of whales, lifts through the low-hung clouds its green head, and beholds with joy our coming. The people ſpy our ſails through miſt, and gladneſs is in Carric-thura.

But who are theſe with the king, deſcending to the ſhore to meet us? One tall tree is gray; the other two young oaks are green, but their ſteps are ſtately.---Hail, Connal, from blue Togorma *, is it thou! Hail, yellow ſon of Rinama †, king of plains! And hail, thou ſon of Ruro, from the iſle of boars!

" Let the feaſt," ſaid Cathula, " be ſpread, and the ſhell go round. Let the voice of harps and the ſongs of bards ariſe, that the joy of my friends may be great in my echoing halls. Cathula, O bards, is in the midſt of his friends. This is the day of his joy. Let no ſhade obſcure its beams; let no dark cloud, in its wandering courſe, paſs over Carric-thura!"

Such were the words of Cathula. But how ſhort, ſon of the troubled days §, is the dream of thy joy! It is like the ſhort calm that comes between the inconſtant blaſts, in the night of the ſtorm. The hunter lays down his head in his booth. His dreams of joy are beginning to ariſe: white-handed virgins are coming towards him with their harps: bards are beginning to give his fame to the ſong: ſhields ſound, and his heart bounds with joy for the battle:

‡ Iniſtore, properly *Innis-orc*, or *Orc-innis*, " the iſles of whales," or Orkneys. The word *orc* is uſed in this ſenſe by Milton:

————an iſland ſalt and bare,
The haunt of ſeals and *orcs* and ſea-mews clang.

* *Tonn-gorma:* " the iſle of blue waves."

† *Ri' na ma,*' " king of the plains," or Maiatæ. The Highlanders ſtill call the low parts of Scotland *a mha'-thir*, the plain country.

§ In this apoſtrophe the poet does not mean Cathula only, but man in general, whoſe chequered life he deſcribes thro' the whole of this beautiful paragraph.

battle: fields of fame riſe before him; and he beholds, at times, the gleam of a thouſand ſpears.---But the blaſt, in the midſt of this gladneſs, comes. It ſhakes above the booth its terrible wing, and the dreams of joy vaniſh. The hunter lifts his head amidſt the ſtorm, and ſays, "Dreams of my love, why are you gone! or why did you come to deceive me?"---The virgins were of clouds! the voice of bards was but the wind of the heath! the ſound of the battle was the thunder; and the light of ſpears the flame of heaven!

HUNTER of the heath, thy dream was ſhort, but pleaſant: and ſuch a dream was thy joy, O Cathula!

THE feaſt of Iniſtore had ceaſed. The blaze of the oak was paſt its ſtrength. Still, the heroes hear the ſong around it; while Cathula views the night.

"THE ſleeping ſea is calm †. The ſparkling ſtars bend over it in the weſt. They admire, in its ſmooth face, their own beauteous form. They are like the young virgins, when they lean on the brink of their ſecret ſtream, and behold, with a ſmile, the ſhade of their beauty. A ruſtling comes as, bent, they lie. They ſtart. They look, confuſed, around. They ſee it is but the roe in the withered leaf; but the bluſh is on their face of love.---Some of the ſtars are likewiſe ſeen to bluſh; it is the ſign of blood, I fear.---But I will behold the face of the moon. She begins to lift, through trees, her half-unveiled head. Dim forms are on her beams. I perceive their limbs of ſmoke.---I know thee, my father, in thy darkened miſt. But tell me why ſtirreſt thou the leaf with thy ſigh?"

THE anſwer came only by halves to his ear. The wandering breeze,

† Cathula ſpeaks.

breeze, in its fold, had rolled the other half away. He returns to the hall, but his face is ſad. Fingal knew he had ſeen his fathers; and his were always the words of hope. His ſpeech was like the ſound of the harp, when the white-handed daughter of Toſcar holds it.

" In the dark years that have paſſed, a ſilent ſtream, to their own ſea, our fathers trod together in the path of fame. Sarno, Colgar, and Comhal, were three lights that ſhone in every danger. The battle was rolled before them, as the dark, duſty cloud by the whirlwind's blaſt, when ſome angry ghoſt ſweeps it along the narrow vale. In broken columns it flies: it ſinks behind the ſhelter of the woods, and hides its head in the moſs of the deſart.—The ſpirit careleſs rides through air, and purſues ſome other ſport. —Thus ſtrode the warriors. No concern was theirs in the day of danger. Thus they broke the ranks of Lochlin, when its hoſts oppoſed them. And are not we their ſons, Cathula; and ſhall our face be dark when dangers come? Our fathers would turn away their courſe upon their blaſt; no voice of theirs would deſcend into our dreams; nor would their hall open to receive our feeble ſpirit, when our gray head would fall, like the withered leaf in the unknown vale. We ſhould fly, the ſport of winds, in the dim, fenny miſt of Lego.—No; chiefs of Togorma and Iniſtore, our fathers have left us their fame; and the mighty ſtream, increaſed with our renown, ſhall, like growing Lubar *, roll down to our children."

" And long," ſaid Cathula, " may the ſons of Fingal rejoice in their father's fame. May they brighten in its beams, in the

* *Lubar*, " a winding river;" often mentioned in the old Galic poems.

dark ages to come, and the bard ſay in his ſong, ‘ He is of the race of Fingal.’—But to no ſon of mine ſhall my renown deſcend, a bright beam, to ſhine around him. Conloch, ſon of my love! that ſad night, which tore thy mother and thyſelf at once from my arms, riſes with all its ſtormy horrors in my view, and wounds afreſh my ſoul. It riſes before me like the ſea of Iniſtore in that night of ſtorms. The rocks hear the noiſe of its waves, and they ſhake, with all their woods. The ſpirit of the mountain roars along the fall of ſtreams; and the dweller of Iniſtore fears his trembling iſle may ſink.—But grief ſtops the voice of Cathula. His ſoul is a ſtream that melts, when tender thoughts are warm within.—Let me hear the ſad tale, O bard, from thee. It awakes my grief; but I love it.”

* * * * * * * * * *

I HEAR the din of arms in Icroma †. I hear, through its woods, the echo of ſhields. I ſee the blaze of ſwords, gleaming to the moon. I ſee the ſpear of battle lifted. The roe ſtarts from his midnight reſt, and Turlèthan * fears the danger.—But why art thou afraid, roe of the mountain? Why trembleſt thou, Sgaro, in thy halls? Sora’s king is ſtrong, but the wind of the north is awake. Upon its cloudy wing Cathula comes, like a red angry ghoſt of night, when hunters tremble on Stùca. The ranks

† *I-croma*, “ winding or crooked iſle.” The poem, which in this place is not entire, brings Cathula very abruptly to Icroma, in order to aſſiſt Sgaro; but the tales or *urſgeals* mention ſeveral previous circumſtances, which it might be tedious, and not eſſential, to mention.—With the confuſion and terror that attend war, as deſcribed in this paragraph, the calm joy of peace is happily contraſted in that which follows. The narration of this expedition ſeems to be put in the mouth of Cathula’s bard.

* *Tur-leathan*, “ broad tower;” the name of Sgaro’s palace in Icroma.

† This,

ranks of war are broken before him, as the mail of the ſpider before the blaſt. The mighty are ſcattered in his preſence.—Sora, with the clouds of night, hath fled over the ſea. He hath diſappeared, as the path of his ſhip on the deep.—Sgaro, hang up thy ſhield; bring down thy harp; let the daughters of Icroma rejoice.

I HEAR the voice of ſongs in Icroma. I hear the echo of harps in its halls. The ſword of war is ſheathed. The ſhield is hung on the peaceful wall, a dark orb, like the inner moon; and the ſpear of battle reſts beſide it. The roe is glad on his rock. The virgins of Turlethan look, with joy, over their window. The ſun ſhines bright. No cloud is on its beams. But the maids obſerve it not; their eye is on Cathula, moving in the light of his ſteel. They bleſs that beam of brightneſs, from whoſe preſence the darkneſs of their danger retired. "Awake, our voice," they ſay; "awake, our harps: let our ſong be Caric-thura's king †!"

BUT who comes forth to meet the chief? Her ſteps are on the dew of the morning. The tear of joy hangs forward in her eye, like the tear of night on the bended graſs, when it glitters in early ſun-beams. Her face of beauty is half-concealed by the wandering of her fair locks. But the morning-beams look through them on the mild-bluſhing of her cheeks, as looks the ſun on the budding roſe, when its colour grows in the drops of dew.—Who can this be but Roſgala, the faireſt of the maids

† This, of the maids of Icroma, appears to have been a chorus-ſong; a ſpecies of compoſition very ancient, and ſtill much uſed in the Highlands. The time of theſe pieces is adapted to the various exercifes of rowing, reaping, fulling, &c. They greatly alleviate the toil, and inſpire men with ardour to go through with it.

of Icroma?—Sgaro gives her to the chief who ſcattered the cloud of his foes.—" Cathula, were ten daughters mine, Chief of heroes, I would ſay, be thine the choice."

THREE years, on their eagle-wing, flew over the hills of Turlèthan. The hawk darting on his prey moves not with a pace ſo ſilent or ſwift. Cathula looks back on their courſe, as the awakened hunter on the ſpace he travelled over in his dream. He wonders how ſoon they are paſt. " It is time to return to Iniſtore; to the ſtreamy groves of Carric-thura."

THE ſails of Cathula are raiſed. Roſgala, by turns, is glad and ſad. " Adieu, thou iſle of my love; adieu, thou abode of my youth! My friends are on the ſhore: the roes look forward from their buſhy rock.—But why ſhould the tears of Roſgala flow? ſhe goes with Carric-thura's chief?"—Conloch, the young pledge of their love, is in her arms. Two ſtreaks of light on a cloud are his fair brows. His little helm above them is of the fur of fawns. Lulled by the rocking of the waves, he ſleeps. In the dreams of his reſt, he ſmiles. He hears the buzz of mountain-bees, and thinks he is near their ſtore of ſweet. But it is not the buzzing bee, thou doſt hear, O Conloch! it is the riſing wind, whiſtling through the rattling ſhrouds.—But ſtill thy ſmile is pleaſant. Thou lookeſt like the flower of Lena, when the many-coloured rainbow adorns it in the day of the inconſtant ſun. The hunter, as, haſtening to the ſhelter of ſome dark-bending rock, he ſtrides along, beholds it with a ſigh; for he ſees the ſtormy ſhower, riding towards it on the blaſt: The pillars that ſupport it are hail. " Flower of Lena, thou art lovely; but the tread of the ſtorm is near thee."

THE breaſt of Roſgala heaves under the broken ſigh, white as the

the foam of the wave, when the ſtorm uplifts it, and darkneſs dwells around. The bright drop is in her eye; it falls on the face of Conloch. With the preſſing of her lip, ſhe wipes it away. He awakes and ſees the ſtorm. He wonders what it means; and, ſhrinking, clings to the boſom of Roſgala. She, over him, ſpreads her ſkirt, as ſpreads the eagle of Lora her dark wings, wide, over her young, when they ſhrink in their head from the hail, and hear the voice of ſtorms.—" Fear not, child of my love," ſaid Roſgala; " for thy father is nigh us."—Nor be thou thyſelf afraid, ſaid Cathula; I know the ſea of Iniſtore. Often have I rode its deep, when louder was the roar of its waves.---Roſgala aſks for Iniſtore; but it is diſtant. The ſea hides it behind its hills of foam.---Mixed with the noiſe of waves, riſe, at times, the ſighs of the fair.

Now deſcends, on the deep, dark-ſkirted night. The thunder is in her courſe. The ſtreamy lightning burſts, dark-red, from her womb. Spirits feel its flames. Their ſhrieks are heard in mid-air. They ruſh to quench their half-burnt robes in the deep. The billows roar, with all their whales.---The moon hears the noiſe within her houſe of clouds, and ſhe is afraid to lift her head above the hill. The ſtars wrap their heads in their mantle of Lano's miſt *. At times, they look, trembling, through the window of their clouds; but, quick, draw back their wandering hair. —They are like the hunter on the heath, who ſhoots out, at times, his head, but will not venture forth from his booth till the ſtorm is

* *The miſt of Lano* ſeems to have been a proverb for any miſt of the thickeſt and darkeſt kind.

is over.---Hunter of the roe of the mountain, thou art on the heath on ſhore; O that Roſgala were there!

But what voice did you hear that night, ye rocks of Icroma; when on the deep was ſhe, to whoſe harp you often echoed? Did you liſten to the roar of waves at your feet, or to the thunder that rolled in the blaſted head of your pines? Louder than either of theſe, roſe in your ear the cries of Sulingorma †. She is wildly-ſad, for her daughter is on the deep with her child. She ſtands on the dark rock, careleſs of the beating ſtorm. White billows breaking on the diſtant deep, deceive her oft for ſails.—Mother of Roſgala, retire from the ſtorm of night; thy daughter does not hear thy cries.

Retiring, ſhe ſoon turns back to view once more the main. A wandering bark, deſcending into the creek, is half-perceived. Oh! art thou ſafe, my child!"

"What voice is that on the rock?" ſays the mariner; "my mates take down the ſails."

The voice of joy mixed with fear again is up: "Roſgala! art thou ſafe?"

"It is the cry," ſays the mariner, "of the fair ghoſt that we ſaw upon the deep: behold it there!—Come, O ghoſt, on moon-beams to our dreams, when the night is calm, and the ſtorm is over!"

Sulingorma hears his voice, and ſad retires. The rocks reply to the name of Roſgala.

But Roſgala is on the ſea of Iniſtore. The ſtraggling ray of a di-

† *Sulin-gorma* ſignifies "blue eyes;" *Roſgala*, "fair countenance;" *Cathula*, "eye of battle;" *Conloch*, (or *Ciun-laoch*), "mild or beautiful hero."

diſtant oak travels there over the deep. Cathula beheld his love, like a fair virgin-ghoſt in its beam. In her arms he beheld his ſon. He looked like a ſtar in the boſom of the bended moon, when her face is almoſt hid in grief, and the darkneſs of her countenance growing. He beheld them; but he was ſad, and his half-ſtifled ſigh aroſe. The paſſing breeze bore it to the ear of Roſgala.

" Why that ſigh," ſhe ſaid, " my love? The night on the deep is dark, but the ſtorm will ſoon be over. The moon will come forth in her ſilent beauty; her ſteps on the mountain will be lovely. The ſtars will ſhew their blue-ſparkling eyes in the clouds, and the winds will retire from the ſea of Iniſtore. Nor is Iniſtore far diſtant: is not that the light of its halls?"

" Light of the ſoul of Cathula, the ſtorm will ſoon be paſt; and the light of Iniſtore, amidſt blue, calm waves, ariſe. But what is night, or ſtorm, or diſtance of Iniſtore, to Cathula; while he beholds the face of beauty, with all thy calm of ſoul?—Let me behold the face of my love, O beam! and I will bleſs thee, tho' thou doſt come from Sora's hall; though thou haſt brought me ſo nigh his ſhelving rocks."

Too nigh them art thou brought indeed, O Cathula: on their edge thy ſkiff, in two, is divided. The chief climbs the oozy rock. Roſgala and his ſon are in his arms. But no ſhelter, ſave from cold ſea-weeds, is there. It is, at times, the habitation of ſeals.

" The land, my love, is nigh. My ſtrength, I know, can reach it. On its ſhore I may find ſome boat that ſhall convey us from Sora's wrath *, before the light ſhall ariſe. Reſt thou here, Roſ-

gala.

* The ſituation of Cathula was the more alarming, as he had formerly incurred the diſpleaſure of the king of Sora, by aſſiſting Sgaro againſt him.

gala. The ſtorm is lower. The ſtars look over the edge of their broken clouds, and the moon lifts her pale head through the diſtant tree. They will ſoon ſhew thee the path of my return. Reſt here, my love, Roſgala!—Ye lights of heaven, ſhine on my love; ye ſpirits on their beams, dwell with her on her rock. When you hear her ſay, 'Cathula, what delays thy return?' tell her you behold the ſteps of my coming.

"COME, thou mayeſt," ſaid Roſgala; "but ah! I fear the billow's roar. Some blaſt may raiſe it high; or ſome angry ghoſt may, again, embroil it in his courſe. But thou ſhalt come, my love: and yet I fear.—The ſea may grow; the ſhades may depart; or Sora awake ere thou doſt come. But no; my love ſhall return ſoon. Spirits of my fathers! guard Cathula."

HE went; he reached the ſhore: but no boat is nigh. He runs in ſearch of it far. The thought of his ſoul is on the oozy rock with Roſgala.

WHAT ſhall that helpleſs mourner do?—Her eye is towards the darkly ſhore; but no Cathula comes. The waves grow upon her rock. They gather about her feet. But, Conloch, thou art not wet; thou art lifted high in her arms.

"WHAT detains thee, my love? Have the waves ſtopped thy courſe to the ſhore; or have the boats of Sora been diſtant far?—O that thou wert aſhore, my child! 'Tis for thee that trembles thus the ſoul of Roſgala."

SHE ties him on Cathula's ſhield. A withered tree comes, wandering on the wave, to her rock. On its top ſhe fixes Conloch.

SHALL I awake thee, Conloch? No, thy cries would pierce my ſoul, like darts. Safe thou mayeſt reach the ſhore; and Sora's

ra's king may have pity. Or, thy father perhaps may find thee. But ah! my child, thy father I fear is not. On that cloud his ſpirit waits for mine.—Stay, Cathula; thy love is coming.

A HIGHER ſurge comes, white-tumbling, over the rock. In its cold boſom it folds Roſgala. " Farewel, O my Conloch!"

TOO late, Cathula comes in the boat of Sora. He looks for the rock: but no rock, dark-riſing above the wave, is ſeen.—" The growing ſea hath covered its oozy top! No Roſgala; no Conloch is here! O that the ſame wave had incloſed Cathula! Then, Roſgala, would we ſmile in death; Conloch we would claſp in our arms; his tender frame ſhould not be hurt by rocks.—Shall Cathula die or live?"

THE light, half-mixt with darkneſs, breaks on Sora's hills. A ſmall iſle is near. A watery cave is under its rock; and over its mouth there bends, in its own gray coat of moſs, an aged oak. Five generations ſaw the ocean ſhrink and grow ſince this oak had given the king of Sora ſhelter. In the cave below it he once hid his ſpouſe, as he moved to war. ' To-morrow,' he ſaid, ' I return, and bring the head of Lanfadda.' He went; the ſpear of Lanfadda travelled through his ſide, and forbade to fulfil his promiſe. Two days, with their nights, returned. But no word of thy return, red-haired Ulan-orchul. Oi-dana is ſad in her cave. Her dark hair wanders on winds; and her white hands beat, like foamy waves, her breaſt.—Mournful through night is her voice of grief. The mariner hears it as he paſſes by. He turns to ſee if it may be the muſic of a ſpirit of the deep. And thus was diſcovered the

ſecret cave.—It is here Cathula waits for night. It comes with all its ſtars. Roſgala deſcends on the ſoul of her love. She comes, ſoft-gliding on the face of the deep. Her robe is of the white miſt that riſes on Cona, when morning-dews are melting in the beams of the ſun. But her treſſes ſtill are wet: they drop like the dew of roſes on the bank of their ſlow-rolling river.—She tells him of her fate; ſhe tells him how ſhe laid Conloch on his ſhield. 'But let Cathula,' ſhe ſays, 'awake, and fly ſafe to Iniſtore."

He roſe. In ſilent grief over the waves he came. But ſince, he is often ſad. His tears in the morning flow for Roſgala; and his ſighs in the evening are heard for Conloch †.

GREAT, ſaid the king of Morven, is the cauſe of Cathula's grief. But Conloch perhaps may live. Thy ſhield may have carried him to the ſhore, and the people of Sora might have pity. "He may one day," they would ſay, "lift this ſhield to defend us." Yes, they may have ſpared him; and the warriors may one day ſay of him, "His arm is like the arm of Cathula: his ſpear is like one of the ſpears of Morven." Why then ſhould darkneſs dwell on the ſoul of the mighty? Cathula is not alone when the clang of the ſhield ariſes.

THUS paſſed the night in Carric-thura's halls. Gray morning at length aroſe in the eaſt. His eyes are half open like the weary hunter on the heath when he is ſcarce awake. Dark waves begin to roll in light. Hill's left half their head in day. Stars hide in caves their dim heads; for they ſee the ſon of the morning lift his yellow head behind his hill, and looking, with his broad eye, farther than

† Here Cathula's bard ends his narration.

than ever travelled the reſtleſs kings of the world †. They ſee him, and retire from his preſence; as the daughters of ſtrangers when they ſee Malvina.

Nor did the beams of the ſun, that day, bring gladneſs to the ſcout of Iniſtore. From the height of his rock he looks on the ſea. Dark ſhips are on the ſhore. Like bees iſſuing from the trunk of their oak, when the ſun is on the vale of flowers, they pour on the beach their men. The ſteps of his return are quick. "Cathula! Lochlin is on thy ſhore."

And let them come, ſaid Cathula; for my friends are nigh. But why didſt thou not ſee them ſooner? Why, O ſun, didſt thou not ſooner riſe?—But perhaps thou haſt been hearing the tale of wo, like Cathula; or mourning for thy ſpouſe and ſon.—Yes, great light, for thou moveſt in thy blue field alone: no beam, like thyſelf, attends thee in the glory of thy courſe. Thy ſpouſe has been torn from thy ſide in heaven, by the ſtorm: thy ſon has been torn from thee, as, ſome night, thou haſt been travelling through the troubled deep *. Yes, fair light, thou haſt met in thy courſe ſuch a night as ſeized Cathula; and thou art now the huſband of no ſpouſe; the father of no Conloch.—Yet thy grief is only for a ſeaſon. Thou moveſt forth in the ſteps of thy majeſty, and thy dark foes vaniſh. The ſpirits that ſpread death over the plains in thy abſence, hide themſelves in the caves of the mountains when thou doſt come.—So ſhall the fame of Cathula, in the interval of

† When the ancient Galic poets uſe this expreſſion, they are ſuppoſed to mean by it the Roman emperors.

* The mind, when under the influence of any ſtrong emotion or paſſion, is apt to aſſimilate every other object to its own ſituation. This figure, when properly uſed, has a fine effect, as we are pleaſed to ſee life and ſentiment aſcribed to inanimate objects.

his grief, ariſe. No cloud of ſorrow ſhall hide the battle from his ſight. His ſoul ſhall grow like a mountain-ſtream when its courſe is ſtraitened; it ſhall ſwell in danger like a flood, when dark rocks oppoſe it.

THE ſhield of Iniſtore was ſtruck. Connal took his ſpear; and the hand of Fingal is on the blade of Luno.—The ſtandard of Rinama ſtreams, like a rainbow, in air: the ſon of Ruro and myſelf ſtand like two pillars of ſummer's ſultry cloud: they are fair without; but they hide the lightning in their fold, and the roar of the thunder is around.

As a ſtorm of hail comes ruſhing over ocean*, and drives the ſurge before it, till it breaks its force againſt the ſcaly ſide of a whale or oozy iſle; or as the ſpirit in the ſtorm lifts the white billows in his wrath, and heaves them, with all their foam, hoarſe-roaring over a rock; ſo ruſhed our hoſts, in all their terrors, to meet the war.—We ſaw the crowded ranks of Lochlin gathered around Manos, like flights of ſea-fowl round their own rock. Its dark ſides are covered with their thronging wings; but its head riſes, with all its ſhaggy brows, above them, and ſhrinks not at the roar of the coming ſtorm.

IT was then Fingal ſpoke to Connal, and to the chief of Iniſtore. All the youths bleſſed the king of Morvan, as they liſtened to his words.

"OUR names, chiefs of the battles of the ſpear, are already in the

* In the original, this paſſage is no leſs terrible than the ſcene which it deſcribes.

Mar ſtoirm ghailbheach mheallain
Na ſteud-ruith thairis air cuantaidh,
A' ſguaba' nan tonna ſtuadhach,
'S gam buala' ri † uchd nan ard-bheann;

—No mar ſpiorad na doininn a' ſeide'
Nam beanntai' citi' ſaile
Le'n cobhar ceann-ghlas, a' ſtairirich
Meaſg charraige cruaidh a' ganraich;
—B' amhuil ſin ſarum ar feachd
Dol an cinnſeal gleachd do'n arailh.

† *al. biaſta gabhuidh.*

the ſong, while others want their fame. Let the ſons of youth have the honour of the battle of Iniſtore. We ſtand on the hill, rocks ready to ruſh into the vale, if they need our aid."

THE hand of Ogan is on his ſword: the ſon of Ruro half-exalts his ſpear; and the eye of Oſſian is on Fingal.

I SEE, ſaid the king, three chiefs before the three columns of Lochlin's ſpears. One ſhines a beam of light, perhaps, in the firſt of his battles. Nor is he of the weak in arms. Thine, Oſſian, be the lot to contend with the chief; but quench not at once his fame. The tear, perhaps, is in the eye of his ſpouſe; and his father may now be dim with years. No ſon beſide, perhaps, has the aged chief: Oſſian, ſpare the beam.---Thine, Ogan †, be that other dark leader of the war. "And mine," ſaid the ſon of Ruro, "ſhall be Manos, king of ſpears."

THE kings remained upon their hills. Like three whales, with all their billows of foam, we rolled to battle. But the hoſt of Manos withſtood our aſſault, firm as the rock in the ſea of Iniſtore. Whales ſtrike againſt its ſides, and waves climb up its face. But it remains fixed; all their force cannot move it.

NOR ſtood the ſons of Lochlin harmleſs in their place, when the fury of the battle roſe, and the ſtrife was kindled by the ſongs of the bards *. Ogan is bound with a thouſand thongs, and the ſon of Ruro ſhrinks back from the ſpear of Manos.—The young lifter of

† Ogan: the name of Rinama's ſon.

* It was part of the office of the bards to animate the combatants by their ſongs during the action. The old Perſian Magi are ſaid to have done the ſame; and Homer alludes to the like cuſtom in the time of the Trojan war:

——thro' the Grecian throng
With horror ſounds the loud *Orthian ſong:*
The navy ſhakes; and at the dire alarms
Each boſom boils, each warrior ſtarts to arms.
Il. xi. 13.

of the ſpear preſſed upon Oſſian. I defended myſelf from his ſtrokes, but fought not his early fall.

" Doſt thou deſpiſe my youth, ſon of ſtrength," he ſaid, as the big tear ſwelled in either eye; " doſt thou deſpiſe my youth, when thou doſt not lift thy beamy ſpear? Shall I, all day, beat thy ſhield, as does the harmleſs boy a rock? Shall I reap no ſhare of fame, while my friends hew down the ranks of war?—But I will elſewhere ſeek renown."

His people followed him as he went, and my ſteps purſued him ſlowly behind. I ſaw the chiefs come down from their hills, like three mountain-ſtreams when they leap, white, from rocks, and meet with all their earth, and ſtones, and trees, in ſome green vale below.—Manos meets the king of Morven, and the clang of their ſteel is terrible.—But who could ſtand before Fingal? The ſpear is wreſted from the hand of Manos, and the thick thongs confine him. Connal ſtands in the place of Ogan; nor was his ſtrength in battle ſmall.

CATHULA met the beam of youth that fought with Oſſian, as o'er the field he wandered in ſearch of fame. His heart warmed to the ſtranger, as he ſaw him brightening before him in all the ſtately beauty of youth. What pity, ſaid his ſoul to him, this light ſo ſoon ſhould fail! " Why, warrior of youth, ſhouldſt thou ſo early fall, like a young tree in the vale? the ſummer breeze creeps thro' its bloſſoms, and ſpreads its fragrance on the fields around. Retire, ſon of youth, leſt the maid of thy love ſhould mourn. Retire, for her ſake; that thou mayeſt fight thy future battles."—" But I will be famed in my firſt," ſaid the youth, as on he ruſhed.---" Thou mayeſt,

mayeſt, in falling by the mighty," replied the chief, as he lifted on high his ſpear.

LIKE the force of two warring ſtreams †, or two waves driven on by contrary winds, they fought. Like the breaking of thoſe waves on the rock between was the ſound of the ſhields of heroes. Their broken ſpears fly, glancing, through air; but their ſwords, like meteors wielded by two contending ghoſts, are in their hands. The ſhield of the youth is pierced in the midſt. The ſword of Cathula paſſes through its folds. Nor ſtops it then. Its return is ſtained with blood; and the red ſtream follows it through the cleft in the ſhield.

As falls a green lofty pine by the mountain blaſt *, when the ax hath half cut it through, making the echoing rock ſtart, and the earth tremble around; ſo falls the youth on his ſounding arms. His foot is bathed in a little rill, and his blood is mixed with its gurgling ſtream.

"I

† The Galic language abounds in epithets, which give it often a peculiar energy that cannot always be transfuſed into a tranſlation. Of this we have here a ſtriking inſtance.

'N ſin chuaidh iad an dail a cheile,
Mar dha bhuinne ri treun-cho'rag:
'S gach gaoth a' neartach an ſaothrcach—
Builean bao'bhi', beucach, do'bhidh.
Gu cuidreach, cuidreamach, beumnach,
Bha na Trein mar thuinn tigh'n da thaobh,
Gan ruaga' le ſtoirm, toirt nualan
Air carraig chruaidh meadhon-barach.

* The ancient Galic poets were peculiarly happy in their choice of ſimiles. They always drew them from objects ſo ſtriking and familiar, as to make a powerful impreſſion on the fancy; while a certain combination of harmonic and correſponding ſounds, peculiar to the Celtic poetry, took the firmeſt hold of the memory and ear. This livelineſs of images, and arrangement of ſounds, greatly contributed to the preſervation of their poetry by oral tradition. It was probably with a view to facilitate this, that they uſed ſuch a profuſion of tropes, as may rather dazzle than pleaſe in a tranſlation, while in the original they always charm. The compariſon before us is both grand and beautiful.

Thuit e mar chrann-giuthais ard-ghom
Le gaoith-fhaſaich, thun a ghearraidh;
Le geilt thug a charraig fuaimneach;
Chrithich agus ghluais an talamh.

" I fall †," he ſaid as the ſtrife ceaſed along the plain, " I fall in the firſt of my battles ; and my fame ſhall not be heard. But I fall by the mighty, and my name may remain, with his, in the ſong. ' It was the ſword of Carric-thura's king,' the bard may ſay, ' that pierced the ſide of Anal! I will hear thee, O bard, on my flying wind, and with joy I will ride on my cloud. Cathula, raiſe in this green ſpot my tomb. Place that gray ſtone at my head: but the ſon of future times will not know it. He will make it the bridge over ſome little ſtream which he cannot bound acroſs. Some gray bard will miſs it from its place, and ſay, ' Where is the ſtone of him that fell by Cathula?' And thus my name may be heard.—O that thou hadſt this ſword, Annir of Sora! thou wouldeſt ſhed over it a tear; though without fame thy youth is fallen.—Cathula, hang that ſhield in thy hall. Though it did not defend me, I love it. Once it bore me on the ſtormy billows."

His laſt words were darts of death to the ſoul of Cathula. He ſtood in his place, like the tree which is blaſted by the lightning, for he knew the ſhield of his fathers. He falls on the face of his ſon.

Our heroes gather around them. We ſtand, ſilent in our grief, like the pines of Gormla, when they behold the fall of their companions by an

† In the original, this ſpeech of Conloch is very affecting, and has a melancholy tender caſt which cannot be ſo eaſily conveyed into another language.

Thuit mis' ann tus na t eug-bboil ;
'S chon cirich mo chliu ſan dan.
Ach thuit mi le lamh nam buadh,
'S bialdh luadh air mo ghaiſge le chliu'ſau.
—" Si lann Ri' Innſe-tore
A lot 's an araich an t Aineal."
Beannachd do t anam, a bhaird,
Cluinneam fein gu h ard do ghuth,
'S biom ait a marcachd na ſine,
'S glas-cheo na fri' gam cide'.
—An leac ud 'ſan lonan uaine
Togaibh aſuas aig mo cheann ;
Gus an leagar thar fruthan faoin i,
'S an dean an t Aos-dan a h iontrain.
Ainnir Shora mo ghraidh!
Ged' thuit 'ſan araich ſo t annſachd,
Shille' do dheoir gu bras
Nam faighe' tu Ghaoil mo chloidhe.
A ſhuil cholgach nan dearg chath
Crochs' ad thalla mu chaomh-ſgia;
Sgia' mo ghraidh (ged'rinn i mo leon)
Air 'n do fheol mi ro fteuda ſalle'

an angry ſpirit of night, that had laid their green heads low. We hear, at times, the broken words of Cathula, and echo to his grief with our ſighs.

'AND art thou fallen, ſon of my love*! art thou fallen, Conloch, by thy father! Was it for this I unſheathed the ſword? O that in thy place, my Conloch, I had been low! Let The man of wo be the name of Cathula!"

FINGAL ſaw the grief of his friend, and long deſcended his tears in ſilence. At length he bade the tomb of Conloch riſe, and the bards pour the mournful ſong. He bade the thongs be looſed from the hands of Manos; as thus he ſpoke to the king of ſpears.

" Why, chief of Lochlin, doſt thou delight in war? why doſt thou deprive the warrior of his future fame; and bid his days, like that early-fallen flower, to ceaſe in the midſt? Why doſt thou darken the days of the aged, and add ſorrow to the burden of years, with which their gray head is already bended. Why doſt thou cauſe the eye of the virgin to weep, and take pleaſure in the tear of the orphan?---Are their ſighs to thy ear as the muſic of harps, when thou doſt bid them ſo often riſe? Are their tears a ſtream to thy ſoul, when thirſty? Or canſt thou ſmile, when they weep, becauſe the purſuer of their deer on the mountain is fallen †?---Are

* The original has here ſeveral lines which conſiſt almoſt entirely of interjections. As this ſort of natural language does not always admit of a tranſlation, it will ſuffice to give the words in their Galic garb.

Och! Is ochain! a mhic dhileis!
Gu dilinn cha duiſg thu tuille!
Och! agus Och! nan Och eithre!
'S truagh gur mairionn mis' ad'dhiaigh!

† This image is beautifully purſued in the following extract of a St Kilda lament. True poetry is confined to no time or place. It is the offspring of nature, and extends as wide as her dominions. It is the genuine language of every feeling of the human heart when ſtrongly agitated by any emotion or paſſion.

" Be huſh'd, my tender babes! Your father will ſoon come with the ſpoil of the rock.—What detains thee, my love; why

not the thouſand ills which grow on every heath, and which the ſon of the hunter is heir to, a ſufficient toil to go through ?---Why ſhouldſt thou ſcatter more evils in his way, and ſtrew his path with ſwords ? Canſt thou not walk the few ſteps to the tomb without treading in blood ; may not the deer of thine own woods ſuffice thee ?---Like that ſhadow, muſt thou fly unſettled over every field, though the ſqually wind, that ſhall ſcatter its dark miſt, is ſo nigh it ?---Behold the blood of Conloch : behold the grief of Cathula : and behold the ſword of Luno.---But my ſword, Manos, ſeeks not thy blood. Go ; return to thy ſpouſe, and purſue thy deer ; but let thy ſhip bound no more towards Morven, or the ſtormy ſea of Iniſtore."

" If it ſhall ; then may this broad ſhield, by which my father ſwore, no longer defend the breaſt of Manos !---O that I had not done ſo much ; for dear to my ſoul was he that is low !"

He failed in his dark ſhips on the wave. Mournful, we go with Carric-thura's chief. The ſteps of his ſilence were ſlow : and often, in the midſt of his troubled ſigh, he ſtood, and looked back on the tomb of his ſon.

MANOS :

why ſo long this day is thy abſence ? Haſt thou forgot thy ſpouſe and children of youth ; thy ſiſter of love, and mother of age ? No : but perhaps the fowls have been ſhy, or ſcared away ; or, ah me ! perhaps the ſtring has been weak, or the rock been ſlippery.---What detains thee, my love ? I will look for thy return from this peak of the rock.

" I ſee none move through the gray cliffs.---But ah ! who is that, daſh'd at their foot by the waves ? O ! 'tis he ; 'tis my love ! he fell from their terrible height ! O my love ! doſt thou not hear ; doſt thou not pity the tears of thy ſpouſe and orphans ? Thy ſiſter, too, calls ; and thy mother, in all her feeble years, is ſad. But thou heareſt not ; neither ſhalt thou any more ariſe !---My love, thou haſt left us helpleſs indeed !---Our fiſhes from henceforth ſhall ſport, ſafe, in their ſea ; our fowls ſhall roam, free, through their air : our eggs ſhall remain in the cleft of of their rock.---He that could bring them home is gone ! My love, thou haſt left us forlorn indeed !"

MANOS*:

A POEM.

The ARGUMENT.

Fingal, returning from his expedition to Iniſtore, mentioned in the preceding poem, finds an old man in great diſtreſs in Icola, a ſmall deſart iſle. His ſtory is told. Fingal and his men bring him with them, and promiſe to redreſs his wrongs. On their arrival on the coaſt of Morven, they find Manos, notwithſtanding his promiſe, had taken advantage of their abſence, and landed there before them. They offer him peace, which he rejects. After a ludicrous duel between two of their men, Fingal and Manos engage in ſingle combat, in which the latter is worſted, and mortally wounded.---After the fight, Umad, the old man who had been found in the cave, meets unexpectedly with his daughter, and obtains relief from Fingal.---The poet begins this piece with an addreſs to his harp.

DESCEND from thy place, mournful harp of Cona; deſcend, thou dweller between the dark-cruſted ſhields of my father. The winds are abroad: ghoſts ride on their bluſtering wings; perhaps

* This poem is called in the original *Cath Mhanuis*, "the battle of Manos;" and ſometimes, from the ſcene of it, *Laeas Lao'ire*, "the day of the water of Lora." Several circumſtances in it are ſo calculated to lay hold of the memory, and ſtrike the minds of *The many*, that it is ſtill one of thoſe that are moſt generally repeated by the lovers of ancient poetry; though the correct editions of it are not the moſt common.

That part of it which relates to Umad and his dog, is often repeated by itſelf, and well known by the title of "*Laoidh 'n Amadain mhoir 's a ghaothair bhain;*" or "*Laoidh 'n Umaidh gan geille' na ſloigh.*" *Amadan* and *Umaidh* are ſynonimous names: they ſignify "a fond," or "fooliſh man." It begins with theſe lines;

Tuirling a chlarſach a bhroin,
Tha cho'nuidh meaſg ſgiathan mo ſhiunſear;
Tuirling

haps when they hear thy voice, they will bid their airy courſers ſtop, that they may liſten to their praiſe.---Yes; for the night is already calm: the blue face of the ſea is ſmooth; no breeze moves the withered leaf. The thiſtle's beard hangs in mid-air: the moon reſts on the hill, its beams are on the low miſts of the vale. In its gray ſkirts are the habitation of ghoſts; they hover in ſilence over the bard, for ſtill they retain their love to his ſong.

And the ſong of Oſſian ſhall not be with-held, ſpirits of my love: neither ſhall the harp of Cona, when you are nigh, be ſilent. It is not ſweet as the harps of clouds, for its voice of age is mournful. But you love it, becauſe it awakes the memory of the paſt, and brings back the days of your joy. You bend from your clouds to hear it, as liſtens ſome bard in the ſunny vale to the weak lay of the graſshopper. I liſten, he ſays, for I heard it when I was young, and loved it. Thus you ſtill love the ſong of Oſſian.—But are there no bards that attend yourſelves on your dark-winged courſe; who pour their nightly ſong in your duſky hall? Where is Ullin, the gray bard of other times, with his ſweetly-trembling harp? Where art thou, Alpin, with thy pleaſant voice? And, tuneful Carril, where art thou? Have you forgot all the ſongs of Selma; are you ſilent in praiſe of the heroes of Morven? No; ſons of the ſong, you ſtill tune your airy harps to their fame. The ſound mixes with the ſigh of the mountain: the hind, liſtening beneath the tree of her ſtream, hears it, when moon-beams glitter in the vale, and all is calm around. Sometimes alſo, I hear your ſoft voices in the breeze of night, when ſcarce moves the edge of the light withered

Tuirling 'ſgu cluinnte'r le taibhſean
Air itte' na gaoith do cheolan,

'S iad a' coſga ſion-ſteuda dan ſpeur
A dh'eiſdeachd ri ſuaim do thormain.

ed leaf of the oak. The thouſand ghoſts, with their dim joy, gather around you, to hear the voice of their praiſe *. They bend forward, leaning on their deathleſs ſpears. Their ſhields, like the broad miſt of the darkened moon, hang on the half-viewleſs belt; and the meteor-ſword, is in the dark, ſhadowy ſheath beſide it.

But how feeble are you become, my friends, who once have been ſo mighty! A rougher blaſt, on the wing of its whirlwind, comes: the harp and the bard are driven before it; and the heroes are rolled, a mixed cloud, together.—The ſound of their muſic ſtill ſpreads along the ſilence of Morven; themſelves are ruſtling in the diſtant blaſt, and mixing their voices with the ſtream of Lora.

It was not ſo I beheld you once, heroes of woody Morven! It was not ſo I beheld you, when you followed the king, like the ſtrength of his thouſand ſtreams to battle, when the ſtrife of Manos roſe. It roſe on Lora, like the ſudden ſtorm of Lumon, which overtakes the mariner when he lays down his head, and ſays to his mates, We ſhall now have calm.

We

* The fancy of this paſſage ought, perhaps, to procure it a place in the poet's own words:

Ullin aos-lia nan teuda binn.
Ailpein ghrinn, 's a Chaorril cheol'air,
'N do chaill ſibhs' orain ne Feine,
'S ar ſpeis do chleachda nam Mor-bheann?
Ni h amhluidh; a chlanna nan dan,
'S trie ſonn ar clarſach 'ſa cheo,
'Se taosga' le oſſun an aonaich
(Feadh ghleanntai 'ſanin nam faſach,)
Gu cluas na h eilid 'ſi 'g eiſdeachd,
Fu' ſhruth-gheugan 'ſ an oidhche ſhaimhe.
'S ni'n tearc gum chluaſa ſein
Tuaim ea'trom ar ciuil bhinn,
Tra 'ſ gann air guala na daraig
A gluaiſeas an duilleach tha ſeargte.
—Chi mi doilleir mile tannas
Ag ia'adh, nam pannal, man cuairt duibh,
A chlaiſdin am molaidh ſein
'S an taic ea'trom ri ſleaghan gun bhuaire.
Tha'n ſgia, mar chruth dorcha na Gealaich,
Air crios leath ſholuicht nan nialuibh,
'S an cloidhe dealain na thruaill ſein,
Ri ſlios doilleir nan treun-churaidh'.
Ach c'ait a bheil ar treiſe anois,
Tra dh'fhogras an oſſag na cuairt ſibh?
'N a luib dh'fhalbh 'm filidh 'ſ a cheol,
'S na fir mhora nan neula duaichni'.
Tha 'm ſonn a ſgaoile fea' ghleanntai' toſdlach;
'S iad ſein ann oſnaiche Laoire.

We ſailed from Carric-thura's bay. Night tumbled in her reſtleſs bed from wave to wave; and the thick-woven clouds, with their many folds, concealed the ſtars. Night, thou art dark indeed.—Lift, Morven, ſaid the bards, thy head through clouds. Selma, pour thy beam. Tonthena †, ſhake thy red hair above miſts; Uloicha, let the travellers of Ocean ſee thy beam. And thou, broad moon, lift on the wave thy face, and ſpread in clouds thy white ſails.

—But what faint light is that, which ſhoots its feeble ray thro' the gloom? It is like the eye of a ghoſt, when it darts a dim flame from his face, when the duſky winds lift, at times, his miſty hair. It is ſome friendly ſpirit that guides us on the nightly wave: in its path let us ſteer our courſe.

We reached the flame, dim-ſhining in its place; but no ghoſt was there. It was the light of the cave of Icola *. The beam had been dying away, after its flame had meaſured half the night. The burſt of grief, as we approached it, met our ear. It ſighed frequent in the gale of reeds. It came, pouring, from the hollow womb of a rock, and whiſtled mournful in its moſſy beard. We ſtood and liſtened to its ſound. It melted our ſouls of war.

"Thou art fallen, friend of my age! and I remain alone in the cave of my rock. I groan beneath the load of ſorrow, and of years.

† *Ton-thena*, "fiery tail;" *Iul-coicha*, "guide of night;" the names of certain ſtars.

* One of the Hebrides ſtill goes by this name, but it is uncertain whether it be the ſame; as almoſt all theſe iſles have loſt their ancient names, and retain only thoſe that have been given them by their foreign invaders, when ſubject to the crown of Norway. Hence the names of theſe *Innſe-Gall*, or, "iſles of the ſtrangers," cannot be traced to any Galic etymon; while thoſe of every country, promontory, &c. on the continent, have generally a ſignificant meaning, and an obvious etymology.

years. O thou laſt of my friends, why haſt thou ſo early left me! O that I had died before thee! Then wouldeſt thou have ſhed on my corſe the tear; and ſpread on my cold clay the duſt. But thou couldſt not ſurvive me long. Thou wouldſt waſte in thy grief, like the flower of Etha, when its root is conſumed by the ſecret worm. I remember thy ſorrow when my foot had failed. Untaſted beſide thee lay thy food. Had I died; for very grief, thou wouldeſt go with me to the tomb. For thee can I do leſs?—But ſhould I wiſh to live, can I, on one foot, purſue Icola's deer, or have I another friend to bring them to my cave in their chace? O that the laſt had never come there! It was with it thou didſt fall over the rock in death.

" But thou wouldſt not leave me, O Gorban †, alone: I think

† *Gaor-ban*, " a white hound." The lamentation of Umad for his hound will not appear unnatural or extravagant if we conſider the ſituation of the mourner. Lame, old, in a deſart iſle, and deſtitute of all other means of procuring ſubſiſtence; his hound to him was every thing. The attachment and ſagacity of the animal himſelf ſeem alſo to have been remarkable. Two days and nights he had lain on the tomb of his maſter's murdered ſon, as if he had meant to expire on the grave where his duſt had been repoſited, if the neceſſity of the old man had not called him away to a voluntary exile. His uſefulneſs and ſagacity there, we have already ſeen.

If we form our opinion of what theſe animals were at that time, from what we now find them, we may perhaps be not a little miſtaken. Their uſefulneſs to ſociety at that period, raiſed them to a rank which now they have no title to hold. Their education and occupation were the ſame with thoſe of man; and they conſtantly enjoyed both his company and his friendſhip, which muſt have greatly improved their nature, ſo ſuſceptible of imitation and of gratitude. Strangers to the kennel, man late and early was their only companion; and man, the faireſt copy they knew, they ſtrove to reſemble. By man they found themſelves raiſed above their proper place in the ſcale of being, for which they ſhewed their gratitude by exerting themſelves to ſerve and to pleaſe him. This mutual friendſhip became at length ſo perfect, that almoſt all nations in the hunting ſtate, or firſt ſtage of ſociety, allowed, that even in their paradiſe, or that " humbler heaven" which they expected beyond this life,

" Their faithful dog ſhould bear them company."

" It

think I hear thy ſpirit's tread. Till Umad be there, thou careſt not for the deer of clouds. Soon ſhall the ſtag thou haſt left me fail; and then ſhall I aſcend to meet thee in midſt. Be thy ſteps nigh my cave till then; at its ſhadowy ſide ſhall thy grave be dug. O that ſome wanderer over the wave would make beſide it my narrow bed!"

Why, ſaid Fingal, doſt thou weary for the narrow bed, dweller of the cave? Is not the night of the tomb long enough, although thou ſhouldſt not bid its darkneſs haſten. Thou art not deſtitute; tho' time ſhakes in all thy limbs, and thy friends, like the years that are paſt, have failed. They are not the foes of the feeble, dweller of the rock, who are now around thee.

"I know, children of night, you are not foes to the feeble, but you are of the feeble yourſelves. You cannot purſue the deer for Umad; neither can you dig, when he is no more, his grave. But you are not of the ſons of the wind; I ſee your arms of ſteel. Come, ſtranger, into my cave; come, from the wanderings of night. Often have I ſpread the feaſt, and rejoiced in the preſence of the ſons of other lands. But now, no ſtranger do I ſee, though my cave is ſtill open, and my nightly beam is kindled to guide them. Come, from the wanderings of night, and partake of my feaſt. It is the laſt gift of my low-laid friend; for there you behold the fair Gorban dead. No more wilt thou riſe, my Gorban!"

We entered and ſaw the white hound for which the aged mourn-

It cannot be thought that too much ſtreſs is laid on the circumſtances to which this attachment has been aſcribed, if we conſider, that even the ox of the Hottentot has acquired almoſt as much ſagacity as has *now* the dog of the European. And this is imputed, by *Buffon*, to his having the ſame bed and board and lodging with his maſter.

* It

mourned. Over it he leaned on a pointleſs ſpear; on the end of it reſted his tearful cheek. The wind of the cave ſpread over his breaſt his white beard, and toſſed his few gray hairs about his neck.—" But thou wilt not riſe," he ſaid with a ſigh; " thou wilt ſpring no more with joy on the heath, nor bring the wearied ſon of the mountain to my cave. No; but Gorban, on our clouds we ſhall meet *."

We partook of Ulmad's feaſt, and liſtened to his tale.

" He whom you here behold, in all the trembling of age, was once no dweller of a lonely cave: he was the chief of Stramora's echoing vale. Stramora, vale of my love! blue at the foot of thy gray rocks were thy ſtreams; and green, on thy lofty hills, thy woods. Many were the heroes who feaſted in my hall in peace, and ſtood behind the ſtreaming of my banners in the day of war. My deer wandered over many mountains, and drank of diſtant ſtreams. The morning ſun roſe on my dwelling with joy; and the evening ſhades were, to my halls, no harbingers of darkneſs. Two glad lights ſhone, in their brightneſs, there: the growing ſtrength of Morad, and the mild beauty of Lamìna. But they were beams that ſhone in the glad vale, only for a little. The ſtorm came, and they hid themſelves in ſecret.—Calmar beheld the beauty of my

 daugh-

* It has been already obſerved, that the ſtory of Umad and his dog is among the moſt common of the fragments of Oſſian. As the ancient Caledonians lived by hunting, it was natural for them to have a particular attachment to their hounds, and likewiſe to put a high value upon poems that celebrated this attachment. Hence a peculiar regard has always been paid to this piece, as we learn from an old proverbial diſtich (ſeldom forgot when the poem is repeated), in which we find it claſſed with Dargo, as deſerving a very particular attention. See firſt note on Dargo.

Gach dan gu dan an Deirg,
'S gach laoidh gu laoidh 'u Amadain mhoir.

daughter, and fought her love; but ſhe followed Morloch to the ſtreams of Glendìvar. The rage of Calmar grew. He came with war from Borba. Age was on the arm of Umad, and my ſon was young. The ſpear which he could lift was ſtill but light; and thin was his youthful ſhield. He heard of the fame of that friend of ſtrangers, the king of hilly Morven. He went by night to ſeek his aid. But Calmar heard the tread of his feet.—My ſon untimely dies!—The cry of death reached my ears. I took the ſhield of my ſtrength in my hand: but I found it heavy. I put on the mail: but my knees trembled under its weight. I tried in vain to unſheathe the ſword. Calmar ſent me to this deſart iſle. Gorban heard my ſteps, where, for two days, he had ſat on the tomb of my ſon. His tears were a ſtream on his grave; but his dreams of night were not of dark-brown deer. The thoughts of his ſleep are of Morad: for him are his frequent ſighs; for he will no more lead him to the chaſe, nor bound with him through the deſart.—He heard my tread, and followed me. But his ſteps were heavy, like mine, when penſive I bore to his narrow bed the ſleeping Morad.—Three years have ſince, with all their lingering days, ſailed by me on the deep. My foot too, by a fall in the chaſe, hath failed. But the burden of life, though heavy as the arms of his ſtrength to the warrior of age, I ſtill could bear, if thou, my Gorban, hadſt remained with me. But now that thou art gone, I ſoon expect to follow."

We felt for the aged chief. The king promiſed to reſtore him to Stramora. He looked to Gorban; and we heard his ſigh. "O that thy tomb were near the dwelling of Umad!"—We promiſed it ſhould; and glad was the face of the aged.

THE winds whiſtled through the withered graſs, and ſhook the waving tree. A louder blaſt deſcended from the mountain. Its tread was like diſtant thunder on the hollow ſtream. Half-viewleſs ſat on its breaſt a ghoſt. He waved, as he paſſed, a meteor like a ſword. The moon half-looked upon it over the edge of the heath, and ſhewed its dark-red ſtain. His words came to ſome of our ears, as rolling by in his blaſt he ſaid, "Warriors of Morven, haſte!"

WE opened our ſails to the wind. We flew over the deep. Our ſpeed was like the whale of Iniſtore, when ſhe is purſued home by the ſtorm of Lochlin. In ſilence we reached our coaſt. Manos was already there. He knew the king was abſent; and he gave his oaths to the wind.

MORNING pours from the gates of the eaſt. Morven lifts its head in gray day. The white miſt aſcends from Lora's ſtream. It climbs up half the hill, and expoſes to our view the ſleeping hoſt. "I will aſcend," ſaid Connan, "and kill their king; why ſhould he again deceive us with his words?"

SOUL of the ſmall renown, ſaid the king, doſt thou think, becauſe Manos is falſe, Fingal will be baſe? Did ever warrior of mine fly, like the ſhaft of night, without ſtriking firſt his ſhield? —Young Fergus, where art thou? Go to that hoſt: tell them, Fingal never draws his ſword till his peace is firſt refuſed *.

FERGUS went; mild as the morning ſun on the mountain, when its beams are bathed in dew, and a thouſand trees, with all their

 flowers,

* This line (in the original, "*Cha d' thug Fionn riabh blar gun chumha*") has paſſed into a common proverb, importing, That the ſtrong ſhould always be merciful;—or, That quarrels, if poſſible, ſhould be avoided.

flowers, are ſeen below in their ſmiling lake †.—But the breeze ſoon comes, and ſpreads a momentary ruffle over the face of the ſmoothed wave. The yellow hills, and the trees in the deep, are vaniſhed; and all their beauty, for a ſeaſon, is failed. Thus ruffled was the mild face of my brother of love, in his return from the hoſts of Lochlin. Fingal knew he muſt fight. "Manos demands the combat of heroes."

THE combat of heroes he ſhall have, ſaid the boaſtful Connan; I will bring to my king the head of the chief.

WHY ſhould not Connan be allowed to know the weakneſs of his arm? He went: but Manos would not fight with the feeble. He bade the vaunting Fuathas come forth, to meet the boaſtful Connan.—In the battles of Lochlin Fuathas ſtood always behind; nor even there was he void of fear. One night as they had fought to the moon, too far behind, by the ſide of a little ſtream, was Fuathas. A tall hero appeared on the other ſide; and taller ſtill appeared his ſpear. Fuathas flew: the other purſued him hard. In the midſt of his fear, as he leapt the ſtream, he fell. Beneath him, to his joy, fell the foe. In vain doſt thou plead for mercy, he cried, as he drew his ſword. But none, ſave his own ſhade, had Fuathas.—Not ſmaller is now thy cauſe of fear, when thou deſcendeſt to engage with Connan.

WE ſaw him come forth from their hoſt: but the ruſt was on his

† The beauty of this paſſage in the original claims here a place.

Dh' imich Fear'as mo bhrathair fein,
Mar orra'-ſhleibhte bha chruth,
Tra bhios dearſa na maidne 's an drinchd,
'Sa choill ſa bla ſan lochan ſhe'ar.
Ach thuirling oiteag on aonach
'S mhill i caoin-ghnuis na tragha;
Threig na coillte,—threig na ſleibhte
Bha 's an lochan ſheimh ri gaire.
—B' amhuil ſin caochla cruth
Mo bhrathar teachd dubhach nar co'ail,
O fheachd Lochlan bha ſiar uainn.
"Tha Manus ag iarruidh co'raig."

his ſpear, It ſounded on his ſhield like the ſcreaming of fowls, when they prepare to fight the battle of the wing on the watery ridge. Connan feared; but he remembered the eye of his king. He ruſhed on with his ſword, and wounded the gray feather in the creſt of Fuathas. At the ſtroke the man of Lochlin falls down with fear. He thought the wound he had received was in the head. Connan turns to ſee if his king beheld. The ſword of Fuathas comes behind, and hews his two ears from his head of pride. The valley echoes to his cry as back he runs to our hoſt. At the foot of the king he falls. " I bravely die," he ſaid; " Fingal, revenge thy hero's death *."

The hoſt of Manos came on with all their ſteel. Many were their ſhields and ſpears; many their rattling mails and ſwords of light; many their axes of war † to hew down the battle.—The joy of our people aroſe, as ſlowly we moved to meet them ‡.

—But

* The heroiſm of Connan, unlike all the reſt of Fingal's warriors, lay chiefly in his tongue. For this reaſon he is upon all occaſions ridiculed and expoſed. Perhaps ſome miſchiefs too, of which he had been the author, particularly the death of Dermid, had helped much to draw upon him this odium. In one of Oſſian's poems he is called, *Mac mor na bha riabh ri olc;* " The heir of all who ever did evil." He is often called *Crionach nam Fiann;* " The blemiſh of Fingal's heroes." And from the above adventure he derived his common title of *Connan maol;* or, " Connan without the ears."—It is a ſtrong proof not only of the valour but of the virtue of theſe heroes, that a ſingle inſtance who failed in theſe qualities was looked upon as a rare phenomenon, and branded with ſuch marks of infamy and diſgrace.—The name of Connan is become a proverbial appellation in the Galic, for *a peeviſh ill-natured perſon.*

† We find no mention of this weapon among the arms of Fingal. It was, probably, peculiar to the Scandinavians, and the ſame with the Lochaber-ax afterwards adopted by the Caledonians.

'S iomad cloidhe 's b' iomad ſgiath,
B' iomad triath le luiſich aigh
B' iomadach ann clogaide cruaidh
B' iomadach ann *tuagh chum ſgath.*

‡ A general engagement is ſometimes related here, but ſo defective and incorrect as not to admit of a tranſlation.

* * * * * * * * * *

—But who comes in his ſpeed from our hills, tall in the beauty of youth? His ſpear in his hand is like a tree: and his ſhield is like the moon of night. He is from the land of ſtrangers; he aſks if he may fight the battle of the king. Fingal beheld the warrior with joy, and bleſſed the ſtrength of his youth. But Manos demanded the combat of kings: for he remembered the thongs of Iniſtore; and his pride aroſe like a whirlwind on dark waves, when mariners fear the danger.

We ſtood in our place †. Fingal went forward in his ſtrength. The ſound of his arms was like the noiſe of the ſpirit of Loda, when he ſpreads his blaſt over the land, and marks his path with death and terror. He ſtruck with his ſpear the broad ſhield. His mail rung with the ſounding of his ſteps: its noiſe was like the roar of a thouſand waves, lifted by the rage of a ſtorm againſt the dark ſide of a rock. The gathering of the tempeſt on the hero's brows is terrible. The ſon of Luno gleams high in his hand. His hair is toſſed on the blaſt of winds, like the foam of a ſtream white-

† This paſſage is much admired in the original, and is therefore inſerted for the ſake of ſuch as may underſtand it. It has indeed a native grandeur in its own dreſs, which will not ſit ſo unaffected and eaſy on the idiom of another language.

Chuaidh Fionn aſios le tartar uamhann,
'S fuaimneach arm mar ſpiorad Ludda,
A' ſgaoile gioraig is crith-chatha
Feadh an rathaid gu grad cho'rag:
No mar mhilte tonn a' beucaich
Ann ſtoirm eiti ri ſlios carraig;
Mar ſin bha fuaim arm fa luircich.
S air a ghnuis bha dulachd catha.
Bha chloidhe libhi' a dealradh,
Togt' ann aird an laimh a churaidh:
Sna gaoithe' ſtrannar' a' ghnafad
A chiabh, air ſhnuadh freotha huinne.
—Na cnuic air gach taobh dheth chrithich,
'S chliſg an t ſlighe fui' a chofan;
Las a ſhuilean:—dh'att a chroidhe;
B'ann fheilidh a chith 's a choflas!
* * * * * *
Chuaidh an ſgiathan breac nam bloide';
Chuaidh an chloidheam gorm a bhearna;
Chuaidh an ſleaghan fada libhidh
A chabba' 's a ghniomh bu ghabhaidh:
Fhreagair na creagan don fhuaimneach
Thug gathana cruaidh gan ſtrachda'
Thall fo bhos,--air corp nan treunlaoch;
Cho' fhreagair na ſpeuran ard dhoibh.

* This

white-tumbling from the mountain rock. The little hills ſhrink before him, and the earth trembles under his ſteps. Lochlin ſee the awful terrors of his face: they ſee in it the flames of battle; and the beating of their hearts is high.

The chiefs meet in battle: their two hoſts look, with trembling wonder, on the dreadful fight.—But its terrors who can deſcribe? Their varied ſhields are hewn, piecemeal, down. Their blue ſwords are broken; and their long tough ſpears fly, through the whiſtling air, in pieces. The echoing rocks anſwer to their ſtrokes; and the ſkies reſound with the noiſe.—Manos at length is bound.

Hold, ſaid Connan, Manos of ſpears, till I cut away his head of lies.

I am, ſaid Manos, in the hands of Fingal; his wrath burns not, like thine, a deadly flame.

Yes; thou art in my hands: nor ſhall Fingal ſtain his fame, with the blood of a low-laid foe. Once more thou mayeſt go: But thy ſpouſe muſt mourn, if thou doſt again come back.

He ſpoke; but the face of Manos is pale. The ſpear trembles under his weight as he moves. The thiſtle comes acroſs his foot. Stumbling, on earth he falls. The broad wound is in his ſide. —His ſhield had opened its boſom to the ſpear of the king; for it had heard his former words *.

His

* This refers to his ſwearing by his ſhield, in the end of the preceding poem, that he would not for the future trouble Fingal or any of his friends. The abhorrence of the poet, or rather of the people whoſe ſentiments he ſpoke, to ſuch falſehood, is ſtrongly marked in his making the very ſhield of Manos reſent it. Even Connan, low as his character appears, had ſuch a ſenſe of the enormity of the crime as to think it deſerving of inſtant death;

Cumaibh rium Manos nan lann,
Sgu ſgarainn a cheann f'a chorp.

As every ſtage of ſociety has its own virtues and vices, it may be obſerved, that lying, perjury and deceit, are refinements that belong to civilized life, rather than to

His tomb was raiſed. But what could the bards ſay†? Manos remembered not his words. When he was aſked what he had done with his oaths? "Alas!" he ſaid, "where I found, I left them."—Manos, thou wert generous; but wrathful and bloody was thy darkened ſoul.

We came to Selma's halls. The young hero who came to our wars was with us. But his countenance was ſad, and often he looked to the hill.—"On its heath," he ſaid, "I left the ſpouſe of my love.

to that period which we call barbarous. The barbarian ſeldom acquires the art of diſguiſing his ſentiments, or the virtue of ſneaking through the winding paths of inſincerity and circumvention.

† Of all poſſible evils, that of being denied the funeral-ſong was thought, by the ancient Caledonians, the moſt dreadful. On the ſong of the bard depended not only their fame in this world, but their happineſs in the next. This perſuaſion could not fail to have a happy influence upon their conduct, as it would be a continual ſpur to good and great actions. Even till ſome time after the extinction of their ſuperintendants the Druids, the bards maintained their dignity, and diſcharged this part of their office without any reſpect of perſons. In the caſe before us, we ſee the impartiality of Oſſian in drawing even the character of an enemy. His generoſity is celebrated, both in this and ſome other fragments; but unfortunately his delight in blood is always joined to it: He is ſtill

And —Manos, fuileach, corrach, fial,
—Manos, Ri' fuileach nan euach.

The Celtic bards did not, like the poets of Greece and Rome, puniſh any man in the other world becauſe he was unfortunate in this; as was the caſe with every one whom they forced to wander "A hundred years a melancholy ſhade!" (Æn. 6. 329.), for the want of burial. For their own faults only, the bards called people to an account: And then, as vice was never to be allowed quarter by them, they condemned the guilty to an adequate puniſhment, not only for a hundred years, but for ever; or at leaſt till the *brath* or *dilinn*, when the world was to undergo a general revolution by fire or water. The morality which they inculcated was not the leaſt valuable property of Oſſian's poems. And it is remarkable, that his moral paſſages are in the original always ſhort and ſtriking; as if they had been intended to take hold of the memory, and to paſs, as moſt of them have done, into common proverbs.—When any perſon fails in a ſolemn promiſe, nothing is more common than, by a diſtich of this poem, to remind him of the guilt and fate of Manos.

"Cait a bheil na mionnan mora Mhanuis?
Och! dh'fhagas far an d' fhuaras."

love. We fled from the ſtrength of Calmar; for his heroes from the ſtreams of Borba were many, and the friends of Morloch failed.

His words reached the ears of Umad, as, bended, he leaned on his ſtaff, like a tree half overturned on Lena. The joy of the aged aroſe. He aſked for Lamìna. She came. She flew to her father. We ſaw the mingled joy of their ſouls. We wondered why we wept in the midſt of our gladneſs. Our tears of joy were pleaſant; like the ſweet drops that fall from the oak of Morlia, when its green leaves rejoice in the day of the ſun.

To-day, ſaid Fingal, we ſpread for the ſtrangers the feaſt: to-morrow we give the children of diſtreſs our aid. The ſhield of Morven will ſtretch itſelf wide to cover the unhappy; and this ſword is bright with joy when it is drawn to defend them. Then only the ſon of Luno † ſays, "I long to be bathed in blood."

The night was ſpent in the feaſt and the ſong. Nor was thy

 voice

† The ſword of Fingal had this name from its maker Luno, a ſmith of Lochlin, who had likewiſe fabricated arms for ſome more of the Fingalian heroes. In return, Oſſian tranſmitted his name to poſterity in a poem compoſed on the ſubject, and known by the title of (*an Gobha*) "The ſmith." Some fragments of this piece which ſtill remain are very characteriſtical of the manners of the times. In the following lines the poet, with the ardour natural to a warrior, deſcribes the tranſport of their joy on receiving theſe implements of war; "O how glad were we the next morning on receiving our arms from Luno!"—He alſo tells the different names or epithets given to their reſpective ſwords: ſuch as, "the ſon of Luno;" "the flame of the Druids;" "the raven, or bird of prey;" &c.

O b' aighearach ſinn an dara mhaircach.
Ann an ceardaich Loin 'ic Liomhain!
Gum bu mhaith ar n ur chloidh'ne
S' ar deagh ſhleaghan fada righne.
B'e mac-an-Loin lann mhic Cu'il,
Nach d'fhag fuigheal riabh dh'fheoil daoine;
Gum bi'n Druì'lannach lann Oſcair,
'Sgum bi Choſgarach lann Chaoilte.
Gum bi 'n Liomhanach-lann Dhiarmid,
B'iomad fear fiadhaich a mharbh i;
'S agam fein bha Gcar-nan-calan,
Eu gharg, ſarum 'n am nan garbh chath.

* The

voice ſilent, my ſoftly-trembling harp *. Thy ſound was not then ſo mournful. Thou hadſt, like me, thy companions about thee; and the king with his heroes heard thee. From their ſeats they leaned forward to liſten; their faces were ſidelong-bending. —No ſilent miſt on the vale were then our friends, my harp.—No mournful voice in the hollow tree of the mountain was, then, thy ſound: no moſs-gray blaſted tree, ſtript bare of all its leaves, was Oſſian.

* The bard had in the beginning of the poem addreſſed himſelf to the ſolitary companion of his wo, the harp; and here he again returns to it.

TRA-

TRATHAL*:

A POEM.

The ARGUMENT.

Ossian, feeling the ſun warm on the tomb of Trathal, addreſſes that luminary, and relates an adventure of the hero on whoſe tomb he ſits.—Colgul, having been worſted by Trathal at the chace and tournament, contrived a ſtratagem to reſent the ſuppoſed affront. He lands a number of his followers on the coaſt of Morven; and ſends an old man to Trathal to counterfeit diſtreſs, and aſk his immediate aid. Being thus enſnared, he defends himſelf with great bravery; and kills many of his opponents, with their leader, before he is miſſed by his people, who at length come to his aid.

SON of the morning, the ſteps of thy riſing are lovely; the lifting of thy yellow hair above the eaſtern mountain. The hills ſmile when they behold thee; and the glittering vales, with all their

* The hero of this poem was grandfather to Fingal, and generaliſſimo of the Caledonian army in their wars with the Romans. There is frequent mention made of him in the other poems of Oſſian, and in tradition he is famous on account of his wars with the Druids. This piece, which could not be got altogether complete, goes by the title of

Sgeulachd air Tra'ul nam buadh
'S air Colguil nan tual bheart;

"The ſong of Trathal the brave, and of Colgul of the baſe deeds."—The addreſs to the ſun, with which it opens, is extremely beautiful; but, towards the end, reſembling ſomewhat that grand paſſage of the ſame kind in Carthon. It was natural for ſightleſs Oſſian, as well as for Milton, to make frequent addreſſes to this luminary. It is probable, however, they had at firſt no idea in common, tho' they may have been afterwards confounded by the careleſſneſs of thoſe who recited them. The opening of the poem, as correctly as it could be obtained, is ſubjoined in the Galic.

'S a Muhic na h og-mhadain! ag eiridh
Air ſleibhte ſoir, led' chiabhan or-bhuidh;

'S

blue ſtreams, are glad. The trees lift their green growing heads through the ſhower to meet thee; and all the bards of the grove ſalute, with their morning-ſong, thy coming.—But whither does the night fly, on its dark eagle-wing, when it ſees thy face; and where is the place of darkneſs? Whither do the ſtars retire from thy preſence, and where is the cave in which they hide their trembling beauty? Into what deſart doſt thou chaſe them, when thou climbeſt the mountains of heaven, and purſueſt them, like a mighty hunter, through the blue fields of the ſky?—Son of heaven, the ſteps of thy courſe are lovely, when thou travelleſt above, in thy brightneſs, and ſcattereſt from thy face the ſtorms. The departure of thy yellow hair is lovely, when thou ſinkeſt in the weſtern wave; and lovely is the hope of thy coming. In the miſts of night thou never loſeſt thy courſe; and tempeſts, in the troubled deep, in vain oppoſe thee. At the call of the morning thou art always ready, and the light of thy return is

'S ait ceime do mhais air an aonach,
'S gach caochan gurm 's a ghleann ri gaire.
Tha croinn uaine, ro dhriuchd nam fras,
Ag eiridh gu bras ad cho'ail;
'S filidh bhinn nan coillte fas
A' cuir failt ort le 'n oran maidne.
Ach c'ait a bheil ciar-im'eachd na ha oiche
(Rod' ghnuis) alr ſgiathan an ſhirein?
C'ait' a bheil a'g duibhre a co'muidh,
'S uaimh chofach nan reulta foillſe,
Tra leanas tu'n ceime gu luath,
Mar ſhealgair gan ruaig 's na ſpeuran;
Thus a' dire' nan aonach ard,
'S iads' air faoin-bheannta fas a leimnich?
'S aoibhin do ſhiubhal a ſholluis aigh,
A ſgaoileas le d' dhearſa gach donionn,
'S is maiſeach do chleachdan oir
A' fnamh ſiar 's do dhoigh ri pille'.
Le ſeachran ann dalla-cheo na h oi'che,
Cha ghlacar thu choidh' ann ad churſa;
'S doinionn nan cuanta gabhaidh
Cha ſeid gu brath a s t iul thu.
Le gairm na cinin-mhadain bidh t eiridh,
'S do ghnuis fheilidh a' duſga' gean;
A' fogra' na h oich o gach ait'
Ach fuil a bhaird nach faic do ſhollus.
Ach amhuil ſo aos-lia lag
Bidh tuſa fathaſd a' d' aonar;
Do ſhiubhal 'sna ſpeuran mall
'S tu dall mar mis'air an aonach.
Doilleir mar ghealach nan tra,
Bidh t anra 's tu ſiubhal nan ſpeur;
Caiſeamachd na maidne cha chluinn thu;
Mar na ſuinn gun luadh ri eiridh.
An ſealgair ſeallaidh fo'n raon
Ach chon fhaic e t aogas a' ti'ean;
Bruchdai' a dheoir, 's e pille' fu fmalan,
" A mhadai' mo ghnaidh! threig a ghnian ſin."
—Bidh aibhneas ann ſin air ſolluis na h oi'che,
Tra bhios Mac na foillſe mar Thra'ul.

is pleaſant. It is pleaſant; but I ſee it not, for thou doſt not diſpel the night from the eye of the bard.

—But the miſt of years, one day, may dim thy own countenance; and ſlow, like mine, may be thy ſteps of age on Morven. A dim circle, like thy ſiſter, thou mayeſt wander through heaven, and forget the time of thy riſing. The voice of the morning will call, but thou wilt not anſwer. The hunter from his hill will look for thy coming, but he ſhall not behold thee. The tear will ſtart into his eye. "The beam of heaven," he will ſay to his dogs, "hath failed us!" He will return to his booth in ſadneſs. But the moon will ſhine in her brightneſs; and the blue ſtars, in their place, will rejoice.—Yes, O ſun, thou wilt one day grow old in the heavens; and, perhaps, ſleep in thy tomb, like Trathal.

Dost thou not remember, O ſun, the car-borne chief? His ſteps before thee on the mountain were lovely. One day as he wandered on Gormal's heath, the beauty of youth, like light, was around him. A ſpear was in either hand; and the ſhield of his father was broad, like thy face, before him. His ruddy cheeks roſe beneath a dark helmet, and his hair deſcended in ſtreams upon his neck. As he went, he whiſtled, careleſs, the ſong of heroes. A ſon of age riſes before him on the heath. His eye is red: on his cheek there reſts the tear. Sad is his voice of grief, and mournful ſings in his gray hair the mountain-wind.

"I come," he ſaid, "to aſk thine help, if thou art Trathal king of ſpears. On the banks of the diſtant Dula, many heroes heard once the ſhield of Tual-arma, and many ſtrangers in his hall have feaſted. But heroes hear now the ſound of my ſhield no more; and my halls, where blazed in the midſt of ſongs the oak, are ſilent

lent, cold, and deſolate. Mor-ardan ſaw the beauty of my daughter. No other child was mine. He loved her; but ſhe heard him not. The wrath of his boſom was a fire that was concealed. He came on the ſea with his ſkiff. Four roſe upon his oars. Sliſgala and her father ſtood upon the ſhore. We are forced to go in the boat. The ſtorm detains them now on thy coaſt. Give me, Trathal, one of theſe ſpears; and lend, thou firſt of men, thy aid."

TRATHAL heard the tale of grief. Joy and rage burned at once in his ſoul. He gave the ſpear, and fearleſs went: the murmur of his courſe was like a ſtream that is concealed. An hoſt aroſe before him. The ſon of age behind them ſunk. The king, in his wrath, half-lifted the ſpear; but his ſoul bade him ſpare the age of the feeble. " Stain not, Trathal," it ſaid, " with his blood thy ſpear."

FIFTY ſpears are lifted; fifty ſwords ſhake their flames, like lightning, around him. Colgul riſes in the midſt. The joy of his face is dark; as fire in the pillar of ſmoke; as a meteor that ſits on a cloud, when the moon of night is dark, and the woody mountains hear the ſtorm.

—IN Dorineſſa he had once purſued with Trathal the chaſe, and lifted with the king, in ſport, the ſpear. But who could purſue the chace, who lift the ſpear with Trathal? The brown-eyed maid of Dorineſſa ſighed, as ſhe beheld the king; and turned away her eye from Colgul. The chief in the darkneſs of his wrath retired, as retires a ghoſt on his ſullen blaſt when he cannot tear the oak. He waits in the cave of clouds, till he come again in the roar of winds.

winds. Thus waited for a ſeaſon Colgul; but now he comes with his thouſands, when Trathal is alone.

THOU art alone, O Trathal; but thy thoughts are not of flight. Thy ſtrength, like the contracted ſtream of Inar, grows. Thy ſoul, like the heaving ocean, ſwells in the roar of ſtorms. Thy joy is terrible, like a ſpirit of night when he lifts his red head in the midſt of meteors, and ſtrides, in his dark-growing cloud, from hill to hill.

* * * * * * * * * *

As the rolling of rocks from the top of hills; as the noiſe of waves when the tempeſt is high; or as groves when their dry hair is ſeized by flames through night,—ſuch was the terror of the path of Trathal. Colgul and he were two mountain-ſtreams in the ſtrife: the ſound of their ſteel was like the echo of the narrow vale when its green pines are felled.—Dreadful is their battle! Trathal is a ſtorm that overturns the grove, and a wave that climbs the ſhore is Colgul †. But the eyes of Colgul reel in miſt, as lights on his helmet the maſſy ſpear. Corran ſtands without his ſhield, like a rock which the lightning has bared. Duchonnis ſtops with his hand the red ſtream of his breaſt, and leans his back to a broken tree. The helmet of Cruſollis glitters between his feet, with one half his head, before he falls: and the gray hair of Tual-arma is trampled in blood and duſt, by the crowding feet of heroes.

COL-

† The original of this paſſage is ſo truly grand and terrible, that the tranſlation gives but a very inadequate idea of it.

Chaidh Tra'al a ſios na eide,
Mar ſgarnaich o mhullach ſleibhte;
Mar bhuinne-ſhruth fuaimneach oillteil,
No mar theine 'm falt nan coilltean.
Bha Colguil 'ſ e fein mar dha ſhruth aonaich,
Chluinnte air gach taobh am beucaich;
B' airde fuaim am faobhar geala
Na toirm mhic-thalla 's croinn gan gearra.
Bha Tra'al mar neart na gaoithe
Leagas giuthas Mhor'ainn aobhach;
'Sbha Colguil mar luas nan ſteud-ſhruth
Bhios ri aodan ſhliabh ag eiridh.

COLGUL ſcatters from his red eyes the cloud. He ſees his people in their blood around. Like the dark ſhadow of Lego's miſt, he comes in ſilence behind the king. But he comes not unperceived. Trathal turns. Colgul flies. His ſteps are to the boat, and Trathal in his ſtrength purſues him. A thouſand arrows aim at the king. By one of them Colgul is pierced. He falls upon the ſhore, when one hand hath got hold of the boat. Trathal leaps into its dark womb, and turns upon the people of Colgul. He turns; but a blaſt drives him into the deep, and he bounds in the midſt of his fame with joy.

THE ſpouſe of Trathal had remained in her houſe. Two children roſe, with their fair locks, about her knees. They bend their ears above the harp, as ſhe touched, with her white hand, its trembling ſtrings. She ſtops. They take the harp themſelves; but cannot find the ſound which they admired.—Why, they ſaid, does it not anſwer us? ſhew us the ſtring wherein dwells the ſong. She bids them ſearch for it till ſhe returns. Their little fingers wander among the wires.

SULANDONA looks for her love. The hour of his return is paſt. —"Trathal, where doſt thou wander among ſtreams; where has thy path erred among woods? From this height may I behold thy tall form; may I ſee the ſmiling joy of thy ruddy face. Between thy yellow locks of youth, thou lookeſt like the morning ſun."

SHE aſcended the hill, like a white cloud of the melted dew, when it riſes on early beams from the ſecret vale, and ruſhes ſcarce wave their brown tufted heads. She ſaw a ſkiff bounding on the deep: ſhe ſaw on the ſhore a grove of ſpears.—"Surely they muſt be

be foes that lift them; and Trathal is alone. Can one, tho' ſtrong, contend with thouſands?"

HER cries aſcend upon the rock. The vales reply with all their ſtreams. Youths ruſh from their mountains, and wildly tremble in their ſteps, for their king. They thought of ruſhing on the people of Colgul in their wrath; but Trathal raiſed on the deep his voice, and bade them ſtop the ſpear. They rejoiced when they heard the king, and ſaw him turn to the ſhore his ſhip.

THEY gathered about Colgul; but his face was dark, and the flame of his eye had failed. His people ſtood mournful around; but many of them had ſtrewed the brown heath, like dry leaves on autumn's duſky plain when tempeſts ſhake the oak. We help them to raiſe their tombs; and firſt we dig the grave of Colgul.—A youth ſtoops to place beſide him the ſpear. The mail, in riſing, drops from two heaps of ſnow. Calmora falls above her love.—Sulindona, as ſhe came, beheld her pale. She knew the daughter of Cornglas. Her tears fell over her in the grave: ſhe praiſed the fair of Sorna.

"DAUGHTER of beauty, thou art low. A ſtrange ſhore receives thy corſe. But thou wilt rejoice on thy cloud, for thou ſleepeſt in the tomb with Colgul. The ghoſts of Morven will open their halls to the young ſtranger, when they ſee thee approach. Heroes around the feaſt of dim ſhells, in the midſt of clouds, ſhall admire thee; and virgins in thy praiſe ſhall touch the harp of miſt. Thou wilt rejoice, O Calmora †; but thy father, in Sorna, will be ſad.

† The whole of the ſong over Calmora is beautiful; but the following verſes are exceedingly ſoft and tender.

Biaidh gean ortſa a' d' neoſt,
Ach t Athair ann Sorna biaidh dubhach:
Ag im'eachd air bile na tragha,

Thig

His ſteps of age will wander on the ſhore. The roar of the wave will come from the diſtant rock. ‘ Calmora,’ lifting his gray head, he will ſay, ‘ is that thy voice?’—The ſon of the rock alone will reply. Retire to thy houſe, O Cornglas, retire from the ſtormy ſhore; for thy Calmora hears thee not. Her ſteps with Colgul are high on clouds. On moon-beams ſhe may come, perhaps, to thy dreams, when ſilence dwells in Sorna. Daughter of beauty, thou art low; but thou ſleepeſt in the tomb with Colgul!”

Such was the ſong over Calmora; but who could ſpeak in praiſe of Colgul? He and his people came, like the cloud of death that riſes from the cave of Lano, and creeps through night into the booth of the hunter, when his eyes are cloſed, and all the winds are quiet. Often have their ghoſts ſighed on the mournful miſts that lowly creep along the tombs: often has their voice been lonely there.—But thou ſeeſt them not, O ſun: they only come when darkneſs robes the hills; when all thy beams are away. But thou ſeeſt the ghoſt of Trathal; often does he ſtalk in thy beams at noon, when the hills around are covered with miſt. Thou delighteſt to ſhed thy beams on the clouds which enrobe the brave, and to ſpread thy rays around the tombs of the valiant. Often do I feel them on the bed of Trenmor, and even now thou warmeſt the gray ſtone of Trathal. Thou remembereſt the heroes, O ſun: for their ſteps in thy preſence were lovely; and before their time thou

Thig ganraich nan tonn ga chluaſan.
“ An e ſo do ghuth, inghean mo ghaoil!”
—Tha ula aoſda ri ſiontai’ arda.
Pill gu talla nan corn-glas,
Pill o ſtoirm alluidh na tragha,
’S gun neach a’ freagra’ do ghlaoidh
Ach Mac-thalla † nam faoin-ſhaſach.

† *Mac-thalla*, “ the ſon of the rock,” is the Galic name for Echo.

thou haſt ſhone on Morven. And thou wilt remember them in the time to come, O ſun, when this gray ſtone ſhall be ſought in vain. Yes: for, "Thou wilt endure," ſaid the bard of ancient days †, "after the moſs of time ſhall grow in Temora; after the blaſt of years ſhall roar in Selma."

† What bard Oſſian refers to here is uncertain. He was poſſibly ſome one who had, by way of eminence, the title of "The bard of ancient times." It appears from the paſſage, that the art of poetry was by no means in its infancy in the days of Oſſian. The excellency of his poems proves, that it had been long practiſed, and had then made a conſiderable progreſs. Some have ſuppoſed, that a great number of the Galic tales, which are in a language highly figurative and poetical, but not confined to numbers, have been the firſt eſſays in poetry, and long prior to the æra of verſe. This is not improbable, as the warmth of the uncultivated imagination and the barrenneſs of language would naturally give riſe to all the figures of rhetoric before art could reduce words to meaſure or numbers. As many of the tales which accompany the oldeſt of the Galic poems are of this figurative and poetical caſt, they are a ſtrong preſumptive proof of the antiquity of the poems which they explain. They likewiſe afford a curious view of the Galic poetry in its moſt early ſtages.

DARGO THE SON OF DRUIVEL:

A POEM*.

THE ARGUMENT.

DARGO, the ſon of a chief Druid, having obtained ſome help from Scandinavia, is diſcovered landing by night on the coaſt of Morven. Two of Fingal's ſcouts, who had gone to watch his motions, are worſted by him in ſingle combat, and then ſent to challenge Fingal to battle. Fingal devolves the command that day on Curach, a chief of Innisfail. His father examines his arms; and relates to him an adventure of his early days to Iforno, which prepares us for the ſtory of Ulan-forlo, near the end of the poem. In the engagement, Dargo is ſlain; and Curach, after loſing one hand, and behaving with uncommon bravery, dies as he is retiring from the battle. Some reflections, ſuggeſted by a Druidical grove, and the poet's notions of the ſtate of the dead, begin and end the poem. The ſcene is around the ſtream of Moruth; and the time ſeems to be the end of ſpring, or beginning of ſummer.

A SOUND comes by halves to my ear. It is like the voice of a wave that climbs, when it is calm, the diſtant rock. It is the voice of Struthan-dorcha's ſtream, murmuring, deep, in the vale of

* As the name of Dargo is frequent in the poems of Oſſian, this hero is further diſtinguiſhed by his patronymic of *Mac-Drui-Bheil*, or "the ſon of the Druid of Bel," probably the Arch-druid of the Caledonian kingdom.

The Druids, for ſome generations back, had been at variance with the family of Fingal; and this ſeems to have been the laſt ſtruggle which they made for exiſtence. They had got ſome aid from Scandinavia, and ſeem to have been no ſtrangers to war themſelves. But all their proweſs, aſſiſted with the incantations of their allies, was too weak to cope with a race of warriors. They were forced to ſubmit; but their conquerors, having nothing to fear from them, permitted them

of oaks. In the boſom of its grove is the circle of ſtones. Dim unfiniſhed forms ſigh, within their gray locks, around it. The ſons of the feeble hear the ſound; and, trembling, ſhun the awful ſhadowy ſpot. " The haunt of ghoſts," they ſay, " is there."

BUT your voices are no terror to the bard, ſpirits of dark night, pale-wandering around your awful ſtones. No: I tried the ſtrength of your arm when alive; I lifted my ſpear in battle againſt your mighty Dargo, againſt the terrible ſon of Druivel.

A TALE of the years that have fled, on their own dun wings, over Morven.

THE chaſe was over in the heath. The wearied ſons of the mountain laid themſelves down to reſt; their bed of moſs is in the ſhade of groves. The hills robed themſelves in the folds of darkneſs, and the heroes feaſted in Selma. Song on ſong deceived, as was wont, the night *; and the ſound of harps aroſe. The howling of gray dogs is heard, in the calm of the ſong. Their place is on the top of their rock, and their look is towards the dark-rolling of ocean. Our ſcouts repair to its ſhore; Sulinroda of quickeſt ſight, and Calcoſſa, foot of ſpeed.

SHOULDST thou not now ariſe, half-waſted moon, from thy bed of heath; ſhould not thy horn appear above the rock of Morven? Lift it, fair light; look down, through trees, on the ſleeping roes, and

them to retire to their ſhades, and die in obſcurity.—This poem begins with the following lines:

Tha fuaim am chluaſa fein,
Mar lionn ann cein air muir ſhaimhe;
Do ghlaodh, Shruthain-dorcha, 'ſe t'ann,
Ri torman aun gleann nan geugan.
'N ad dhoirre tha ra' nan clach'
'S taibhſe cianail 'nan glas-eide'.
" 'S tiamhaidh ſo!"

* Till of very late the cuſtom of ſpending the winter-night in the tale and ſong prevailed univerſally in the Highlands. This gave the mind a ſtock of ideas and ſentiments which it can never derive from the few red and black ſpots which conſtitute the great amuſement of a politer age and a more poliſhed people.

* *Sulin-*

and let the ſtream of Cona glitter in thy beam. Point out to our ſcouts the way; and if the dark path of ſtrangers be on the nightly deep, lead them to the feaſt of Selma. The gate of Fingal ſtands always open, and bids the benighted traveller to come in.—Break through your clouds, ſtars of night; Uloicha, pour thy beam!

—But you ſlumber on your beds, ye lights of heaven. The darkeſt clouds are your covering; and thick miſts, fold on fold, like Oſſian's robe, conceal you. No ray breaks through. The heath is dark; and no beam trembles on the ſea, ſave where breaks the wave upon a rock, and ſends abroad its ſound. Ghoſts hear it, as in their ſhips of miſt they paſs, and bid their mariners turn away their ſails.—Riſe, O moon, on the hill of heath; break through your clouds, ye ſtars of night: Uloicha, pour thy beam!

Gray morning half-appears. The heads of the mountains ſee it, and rejoice. A low murmur comes on the breeze; it grows on the ear of our ſcouts. It is the buzz of the morning flies, on their duſky cloud, ſaid Sulinroda*. The hum of the mountain-bees, ſaid Calcoſſa, coming forth from their moſſy hive. The traveller with his careleſs foot hath touched it; and their thouſands ruſh forth to war.—Nor flies of the morning, nor bees of the mountain, make the noiſe, replied Sulinroda; is not that an hoſt on the ſhore, moving through that column of miſt, like the moon of night in her ſteps of ſilence?

The ſcouts, abaſhed, return. They did not perceive the hoſt till day aroſe; and how ſhall they behold the mild face of the king? Bluſhing, they walk with unequal ſteps: on earth they often pitch their quivering ſteel. At the foot of a gray rock, as they

* *Sulin-roda*, "a diſcerner of roads;" *Calcoſſa*, "light or ſwift of foot."

they paſs, they halt. One hand beats their breaſt; the other ſtrokes their beard. A broken ſtream leaps down from cliff to cliff: it falls, a thick ſhower in their wandering hair. But the ſcouts perceive it not; far diſtant, in the caves of thought, is their ſilent ſoul.

AT length the burſting ſigh of Sulinroda roſe. The eagle heard it in the cleft of her rock. She ſhook her fluttering wings, and the ſouls of the chiefs awake. "Let us demand the combat of heroes, and return with our fame to the king."

THEY went, like two mountain-ſtreams that ruſh, white, from the heathy hills, and join in the vale of trees their force. They ſweep the earth and ſtones before them in their courſe, and toſs on every ſide, amidſt foam, their rooted trees. The boy, from his diſtant rock, beholds with fear their terrible beauty. He graſps in his hand the bending oak, as beholding them he backward leans.—Such ſtreams were the ſcouts of Morven; but in the ſon of Druivel they met a ſea.—Calcoſſa firſt is bound. Sulinroda next maintains the terrible fight; but who could fight with Dargo? The hunter hears their noiſe, as he ſleeps beneath the ſhelter of his rock; he thinks the paſſing thunder hath torn its crumbling brow, and he trembles in his dream. The roe ſees him, as ſilent-bounding ſhe ſteals by with her ſon, the dun kid with the long feet. She wonders he does not fly for ſafety, like her, to the ſtream of the diſtant wood. She ſhakes her head, as ſhe flies. The thought of her ſoul is, "Hunter, thou art not wiſe."

THE echo of arms deſcended on my morning dream in Selma. I ſtretched my hand, in my ſleep, to graſp the ſpear. The

next

next breeze drove a louder ſound againſt my ear; I ſprung awake, and ſtruck the boſs.

The king aroſe. The ſhield of Morven ſent abroad its ſound. The heroes ruſhed from their hills, like the path of whirlwinds in withered oaks. In their courſe are a hundred ſons of Innisfail. They ſaw the ſon of Druivel with his gathered hoſt. They ſaw his banners float, with their blended colours, in air. "Give me," he ſays, "the equal combat."

His chiefs brightened before Fingal. But the youths of Inniſfail were ſtrangers. They ſtood, each bending forward as he graſped the ſpear. Their eyes, under their helmets, were fixed on the king: they ſeemed like ſilent meteors under dark clouds, when trembling groves ſee them from afar, and the bounding of roes is to the rock of the deſart.—In the midſt of their ſouls they ſpoke; but no voice of theirs was heard. Fingal ſaw their eyes were flames of battle; and his own people had already got their fame: the children of diſtant ſtreams ſpoke of the heroes of Morven.

Curach, ſaid the king, lead thou the battle with thy heroes of Innisfail. But, Oſſian, let thy ſhield be near: it has often been a rock that ſheltered the oak of the mountain, when its head was bending beneath the ſtorm, and the craſhing of groves was heard around.

The aged chief of Sliruth leaned to the trunk of a pine that had been torn, from its dark rock on high, by angry ghoſts, or eddy-winds. With one hand he, thoughtleſs, pulled off its gray moſs; in the decayed ſtrength of the other, he ſtill held his father's ſpear: its gleam was hid beneath the growing cruſt of years. There, the days of his youth rolled themſelves, a ſilent ſtream, over his ſoul.

All the murmur of their courſe, as they paſſed, was the low hum of a ſong. He wiſhed it might travel with his fame to the years to come.—But when he heard his ſon named for the battle, the thoughts of other years retired. Between his gray-hanging locks aroſe the ſmile, as he turned his eye to ſee his ſon. He turned his eye, but his ſight had failed. The night of age around him is dark: its miſts are thick; no light will diſpel their gloom.

" TAKE, Curach," he ſaid, " this ſpear. Often have the valiant, like dry leaves, ſtrewed its path in war. Wield it like thy fathers. My eye is dim: but let them behold thee from their clouds, that their faces of miſt may rejoice.—

" Let me feel, my ſon, thy ſword, ſince age hath dimmed the eye of Sorglan *. Let me feel thy ſword; is it ſharp and ſtrong for the battle? Let me feel thy ſhield; is it a rock of braſs in danger?—It is; but ſtrengthen its thongs: I wore them not ſo weak in the days of my youth, when I bounded to the battle of ſpears; when the blood, like a mountain-ſtream, leapt in my veins for joy.

" CURACH, thy father, in his youth, was a tempeſt that ruſhed through the ranks of war. Seven heroes attended once my ſteps in Iforlo. We purſued, three days, its deer. The pride of Ulthorran roſe. Never before, he ſaid, was I diſtanced at the chaſe. —On the ſhore he burnt our boat; and twenty of his people he ordered at night to ſeize us in our cave. Iulorno, that beam of beauty in his halls, had heard his words. She ſaw the face of her father dark, as the cloud of Lano before the ſtorm. She loved my ſteps

* *Sorglan*, " open and generous;" *Curach*, " rage of battle;" *Sliruth*, " ſtreamy hill."

ſteps on the heath. My image grew a lovely tree within her ſoul, and ſhe trembled for the growing blaſt. ‘ If it lay thy green branches low, no leaf of mine,’ ſhe ſaid, ‘ ſhall flouriſh; no voice of the ſpring ſhall awake my beauty.’—In the evening we found the beam of light in our cave. Her yellow locks wandered, on her bluſhing face, in the midſt of tears, as ſhe told the tale of death.—‘ Shun,’ ſhe ſaid, ‘ the cave this night; but tell not the ſteps of Iulorno were nigh it. The ſoul of my father is dark, as the gathering of night in the narrow houſe; why ſhould he know that his daughter loves the chief of Sliruth?’

“ She ſunk in her cloud, and retired; like the moon of heaven when ſhe hath ſhewn the bewildered traveller his path on the heath. He was wandering thoughtleſs on the face of a rock; the beam ſhone around him: quick he turns his ſteps; and bleſſes the light that ſaved him.

“ We fought with the warriors of night, and prevailed. We went for Iulorno, but the ſteel of her father had pierced her breaſt. Nigh his gate we found her in her blood. She was fair as the dying ſwan on the foam of the ſtream of Lano, when the arrow of the hunter is in her breaſt, and her down is lifted by the breath of gales.—Her brother aſked her why ſhe would not riſe; and aſked us, wondering, why we wept?—I gave the child a ſword of light. I reared the tomb of the fair, on the ſhore of her native land.—Moon-beams ſhine on the place when all is dark around; and virgin-ghoſts breathe there, on the paſſing breeze, their ſong. The ſoul of Iulorno is with them in miſt; the muſic of her voice is mournful. Through every warm ſhower, the ſun ſmiles on her green turf, and bathes its rays in the dew of her tomb.—Three

days our tears fell on the grave of Iulorno; on the fourth we ſailed in the ſhip of Ulthorran.—Such, Curach, were the early deeds of Sorglan; be thy fame, my ſon, like that of thy father."

* * * * * * * * * * †

As the eagle comes, ruſtling with joy, from her rock, when ſhe ſees her prey, the young fawn, ſleeping in his dun moſſy bed below; ſuch was the joy of Curach as he bounded down to battle. The murmur of his people followed his ſteps: their ſound was like the noiſe of a ſtream, when it travels beneath a rock; like the thunder hid in earth, when the woods ſhake their heads, but no fiery cloud ſinges their blaſted beard.—Dargo came on, red eye of battle, rolling along his hoſts, like the ſtream of Balva. Silent and ſlow, but deep and ſtrong, is its courſe *.

On either ſide of Moruth's ſtream the heroes ſtride. A while admiring each other they ſtand. With joy they bound on their ſpears, and meet in the midſt of the dark rolling flood. Over them bend in ſtormy clouds their hoſts, and mix around them ſteel with ſteel.

† Some verſes deſcribing the manner in which the different companies repaired to their reſpective ſtandards are here repeated, but their inaccuracy forbids a tranſlation. They are ſomewhat curious, as they give the names of the different ſtandards. On this account, a few of them are here annexed.

Chuir ſinn amach a dh' fhulang dorainn
Bratach Fhear'ais oig mo bhrathar,
'S thog ſinn amach bratach Chaoilte
'N Lia'luideagach aobhach anrach.
Thogadh aſuas mo bhratach fein,
'S a follus mar ghrein ann duibhre;
'S thog ſinn amach an Lia'luimneach,
Bratach Dhiarmaid oig o Duibhne, &c.

* Some repeat here a deſcription of a general onſet; but, as the following ſentence gives reaſon to ſuſpect that it is rather a part of ſome other poem on the like ſubject, it is omitted. The verſes, however, on account of their poetical merit, are here ſet down in the original.

'N ſin chuaidh ſinn ann dail a cheile,
Sloigh nan Druidhean 's Suinn na Feine,
'S bu luaithe na greanna-ghaoth earraich
Sinn a' dol ann tus na t eug-bhoil.
Na bu luaithe na milte do ſhruthaibh
A' ruith ann aon ſlugan o ardaibh,
Bhiodh a beucaich gu treun meamnach
Le toirm gheamhraidh o gach faſach.
Cha bheucadh treun thonn na tuinne,
Nuair bhuaile e ri creagan arda
Le neart na gaoi' tuath 's ann fhaoilteach,
Cha ſtuadhadh ri gaoir an ard-chath.
—Ceart choi'meas comhrag nam fear
Cho'n fhaca mi riabh ri m' latha.

ſteel. Here the ſtream runs red. There it breaks white over ſhields. Blood reſts, curdled, on the ooze of its ſtones; and heroes ſwell, in their death, the tide.

But who ſhall give to the ſong the rage of battle! The ſhield of Curach falls from its broken thong. He reaches his hand to graſp it. The ſword of Dargo cuts it off. Clung to the ſhield, it ſwims along the ſtream. But ſtill the other hand is left.

Three ſteps he retires. His ſword leaps from its dark ſheath: its light gleams in air, on high. "Spread, Oſſian, before me thy ſhield; but lift not thy ſpear againſt the foe. The fame of the warrior ſhall ariſe, only, when foes have the equal combat."

I will not fight with the wounded foe, ſaid Dargo. My fame, in his death, would not ariſe. Retire, and think of battles that are paſt. I will contend with that ſon of the king beſide thee.

Curach goes. In his eye is the flame of battle. Lying on earth, he ſpied a ſhield: its owner beſide it ſleeps, nor hears he the din of war. "Bind it, Conchana, with all its thongs to my breaſt. I will elſewhere reap the field. They ſhall not ſee that Curach's hand hath failed."

My ſpear was lifted againſt Dargo, as he roſe on the bank of the ſtream. With the ſtroke he ſtumbles back: a withered oak is graſped in his fall. The craſhing of arms, of branches, and of bones, is mixed.

He roſe, and leaned againſt the tree in his place, His hand lifted ſtill the ſword; but I ſpared the decay of his ſtrength. Around him his people fall, like the withered leaves of the oak before the wintery blaſt. The ſtream leaps, bubbling, over their heads; and ſpreads, around ſtones, their hair. Helmets lift,

here

here and there above the ſtream, their nodding plumes.

LIFT, ſaid Dargo, thou ſon of the king, thy ſword; I am not fallen yet.—I lift mine, ſaid Curach, as he came, ruſhing through the ſtorm of the battle, and ſtrewing men and branches, with his lightning, along the ſtream: I lift mine, he ſaid, as it deſcended, a flaſh that blaſts the oak, on Dargo.

THE chief fell in the ſtream. Its banks echoed around. His people ſhrunk back in their place.—But Cuthon† ſtill rolled our heroes in their diſtant wing, as the whirlwind rolls the pillar of duſt; as the blaſt ſweeps over a plain of ice the driven ſnow. I turned my ſteps to meet him; but Fergus was before me. His ſoul of battle burned at the ſight of Cuthon: his eye was like a ſtream of fire on a cloud of night. He bends forward with the joy of a young eagle, when it ſees its dun prey from Moruth's top. It ſpreads its wings on the ſtream of winds; but the bounding ſon of the roe hears the ruſtling of his courſe, and retires beneath his trees.

CUTHON, a while, ſtood terrible in his place; like a nightly ghoſt when he reſts on Lena. He ſeizes the meteors of heaven as they paſs; he clothes his dark limbs in their terrors, and meditates again the war of clouds above the trembling nations. So ſtood Cuthon, girding anew his arms: but he ſaw his people vaniſh; and ſidelong, he ſlowly, angrily, retired.—Twice, as he went, he turned in the midſt of his doubts, and ſtood like the ſtream of the vale of Balva*, where it knows not which way to turn its courſe.—He looks at length to the place where his father fought. He ſees his red hair wandering on the breaſt of the ſtream.

In

† The ſon of Dargo.

* *Balva*, "a ſtill ſtream."

In one hand he ſtill graſps the ſword; in the other he firmly holds the moſſy oak. Cuthon wildly runs. He lifts a mournful load. He bears his father to his hill: the rattling of his arms, and the voice of his ſighs, are mixed.

We ſlowly returned to the king. A little rill met us on the heath. Curach tries to bound over it on his ſpear: but acroſs it the hero is ſtretched. The gurgling ſtream climbs his boſſy ſhield; and leaps, gray, over his wounded breaſt.

Give, Oſſian, he faintly ſaid, give this ſword to my ſon. In the green ruſhy vale of Sliruth he purſues the tufted down, as it flies on the wing of ſporting ghoſts. Near him the water leaps from the height of rocks: between two woody banks it falls; the ſound, deep-murmuring, riſes on my boy's ear. "I hear," he ſays, "the ſteps of my father."—With the unequal pace of joy he runs to meet me; but he ſees the gray ſtream.—Return, my child, and purſue thy down; my eye will gliſten with joy, as I behold thee from my hovering cloud.—Tell him, Oſſian, how his father died; that the battle may grow in his ſoul, when the years of his ſtrength ſhall riſe.—Oi-lamin † prepares for me the robe. Her tears fall as ſhe bends over the loom. A thought comes acroſs her ſoul, and her white hand ſupports her waving head.—Oi-lamin, thy fears are true; thy hero lies now on Moruth's * heath!—Spare then, my love, thy toil. The gray paſſing miſt ſhall yield a robe to Curach.

We opened the tomb for the chief; and raiſed, amidſt the voice of the bards, the ſtones of his fame. The ſound reached the ear of his father; as, bending forward, he liſtened for the return of his

† *Oi-lamin*, "ſoft-handed virgin." * *Moruth*, "great ſtream."

his ſon. He thought he was coming with the ſong of his fame, and he ſtretched his hand to ſearch for him. The mournful ſong of the tomb ſtrikes louder upon his ear.—" And has thy father now no ſon, O Curach!"

HE came, groping through darkneſs for his way. He ſtumbled on the heath over a hero, whoſe ſoul had been travelling through the path of wounds. " How weak," he ſaid with a ſigh, " is now become the chief of Sliruth!"

THE wounded half-raiſed his head over a broken ſhield, that had been fixed with the head of a lance to his breaſt. " Was the chief of Sliruth," he ſaid, " ever in Iforno?—If thou waſt, take this ſword; perhaps thou mayſt know it. A beam of light I received it, when young. No more ſhall Ulan-forno lift it."

THE memory of the paſt ruſhed, like a torrent, into the ſtream of Sorglan's grief. We heard the burſting of his crowded ſigh over the brother of Iulorno, the early beam of his love.

WE bore the two to the grave of Curach. Sorglan felt the place where he was ſoon to reſt. And Ulan-forno faintly bade us raiſe, with the mighty, his tomb. " Send to my hall," he ſaid, " this aſhen ſpear; it may ſupport, in place of me, an aged mother. But no ſon, no young ſpouſe of mine, is there to behold it. Ulan-forno dies like the young oak on the ſolitary mountain, when the ſpirits of Lano breathe over the deſart. Its roots are torn by the blaſt; and no tender ſhoot from its trunk ſhall ſpring. Raiſe here my tomb, heroes of Morven: ſend home my ſpear."

AND thy ſpear ſhall be ſent, ſaid the king; but is that all thy mother ſhall receive in place of her ſon! Now the oak flames bright in her hall. The ſong of the bard is up. He compares the

the bright blaze to the fame of her ſon. Joy trembles in her aged ſoul, and the tear of gladneſs grows upon her cheek. " The fame of Ulan-forno," ſhe ſays, " ſhall be a ſun to my evening ſteps. A ſtreak of light on the mountain ſhall be the decay of my years. The young ſhall bleſs the mother of Ulan-forno."

She ſtops to wipe the tear of joy from her dim ſight. The ſhield emits a fainter ſound. The colour of its boſs is ſtained: the face of the aged is pale with fear.—The gray dog howls without. Does he mourn; or does he ſee the coming of Ulan-forno?—The aged bard goes out to ſee. He reſts at the door upon his ſpear: his eye travels through the blue land of night. He ſees a ridge of clouds ſailing, on the blaſt, acroſs the ſea. He knows the heroes of his land have fallen. He bids their hall of air to open, and their fathers bend to receive them. He ſees Ulan-forno move before the reſt, a taller form. A ſtar dim-twinkles through the dun eagle-wing of his creſt. Dark-wandering ſtreams mark his broken ſhield; like the black ooze of the mountain-rock, which points the courſe of the melted ſnow.—The cloud varies its form. The bard returns. His face is dark as the meteor at which he looked. His harp is in his hand; but its voice is mournful.—" Hang it in its place, O bard," the paſſing form ſeems to ſay; " for in Morven we have our fame."

Yes, rider of eddying winds, thou didſt receive thy fame in Morven. The king himſelf was not ſilent in thy praiſe, when Sorglan, with the image of Iulorno in his ſoul, ſhed over thee the tear; and the bards mixed thy name with the ſong of Curach.—Often do I ſtill remember thy name, when thou comeſt on thy northern blaſt, to hover above the field of thy fame. The chil-

dren admire thy tall form. " A ghoſt," they ſay, " bends over Moruth; the dim path of the ſpear is in his ſhield and breaſt; and we faintly ſee, through the mark, the burning ſtars."—I hear them, and know it is Iforno's chief. I teach the children the ſong of his fame. They ſay that Dargo, at times, is with him; that the winds lift the red meteor that forms his hair, and that the gray oak is ſtill beſide him†.—I rejoice in their viſits to our hill, where no ghoſt of the departed moleſts them. No; the feuds of other years, by the mighty dead, are forgotten. The warriors now meet in peace, and ride together on the tempeſt's wing. No clang of the ſhield, no noiſe of the ſpear, is heard in their peaceful dwelling. Side by ſide they ſit, who once mixed in battle their ſteel *.

There,

† The poet ſuppoſes the oak to be as eſſential a neighbour to the Druid in the next world as it was in this.

* Oſſian, on ſeveral occaſions, ſhews a liberality of ſentiment which does honour to his character. Here he not only allows future happineſs to his enemies; but, well judging the little differences of this world of too ſmall importance to be renewed beyond the grave, wiſhes for the moſt cordial reconciliation. Thoſe who were at variance here, as he elſewhere expreſſes it, " ſtretch their arms of miſt to the ſame ſhell in Loda." (Poem of Oi-na-morul.)

Such has been the fate of the Galic poetry, that its moſt beautiful paſſages are generally thoſe which have been moſt objected to. To ſuppreſs any of them, on this account, would be as cowardly, as it would be preſumptuous to treat the prejudices that are againſt them with indifference. Every body has as much right in this caſe to judge for himſelf as the tranſlator has, who does all he can to put this in their power, by laying before them the words of the original.

Cuairt nam ſtath gur ait leam ſein
Gu aonach nan-tannas gun bheum,
Far chiurre' gach ſalachd air cul
Sa bheil na feoid a dh'aon run.
Tha codhail nan Cathan ann ſith
'S iad air ſgiathan na doininn gun ſtri',
Gun bheum-ſgeithe gun ſharum lainne
'N co'nuidh thoſdach na caomh-chlainne.
Tha ſliochd Lochlinn is Fhinn, gu h ard,
Ag ciſdeachd caithream nan aona bhard;
An uigh cho'n eil tuille ri ſtri'
'S gun uireas' air ſiothann no fri'.
Tha'n ſuil air na blianai' a threig
(Le ſnotha gun ghean mar mi ſein)
'S air raon nan rua'bhoc le io'nadh,
Oo glas-eideadh air mharcaichd ſhine.
—Mar ſgeul nam blianai' chaidh ſeach
Air iteig aonaich, le'n ciar-dhreach,
Tha aiſling na beatha dhuibh's a Fhlaithibh;
Mar tha dhamhſa Dearg nan catbaibh.

'There, Lochlin and Morven meet at the mutual feaſt, and liſten together to the ſong of their bards. Why ſhould they any more contend, when the blue fields above are ſo large, when the deer of the clouds are ſo many? Like me, they look back with a ſmile on the years that are paſt, and ſigh at the memory of the days that will no more return. They look down on the earth, as they ride over it, on their gray-white clouds, and wonder why they contended.—Yes, heroes of happier climes! you look back on the dream of life, as Oſſian does on the battle of Dargo.—It is a tale of the years that have fled, on their own dun wings, over Morven.

CUTHON * THE SON OF DARGO:

A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

DARGO, whoſe death is related in the preceding poem, being ſent away in the night to his place of burial, Oſſian and Suloicha reconnoitre the enemy. Some of their incantations and ſuperſtitious rites are mentioned. The attitude of Cuthon the ſon of Dargo is deſcribed. On hearing the ſhield of Fingal they return, and meet in their way with a wounded hero, from whoſe ſtory Suloicha becomes much intereſted in his favours.---An affecting incident occurs in paſſing by Curach's tomb.---The command, this day, is given to Fergus the ſon of Fingal. His deſcent to battle, and that of Cuthon, deſcribed; with their engagement.---Fingal, coming to the aſſiſtance of his ſon, puts an end to the battle. Cuthon, leaving the field, dies of his wounds.---He is reconciled to Fingal, His people are invited to the feaſt; and a laſting peace is concluded, by means of Lugar, whoſe ſtory is given.---The poem is addreſſed to the pine that covered the grave of Curach; and the ſcene is the ſame with that of the preceding poem.

THE wind of heaven whiſtles in the moſs of thy gray branch, tall pine of Moruth! The blaſt bends thy withered top, and ſtrews thy gray hair, like mine, around. Our ſtrength is fled on the

* *Cu-thonn*, or contracted *C'onn*, "the voice of waves." This poem is connected with the foregoing; the title of it in the original is generally expreſſed by theſe verſes:

Sgeulachd air C'onn mac an Deirg,
Air a liona' le trom fheirg;
Dol a dhiola'bas athar gun fheall,
Air uaiſlibh 's air maithibh na Feine.

"The tale of Cuthon the ſon of Dargo, when he ruſhed in his wrath to revenge the death of his innocent father, on Fingal's heroes."

The addreſs to the pine of Moruth is natural; as alſo the poet's paſſion for aſſimilating every object to the ſtate of his own mind. In the abſence of his beloved

the wings of years: years that return not again, from the dark wandering of their flight along the ſtreams of the deſart.---But we were not thus weak, when roared on the heath of Moruth the ſtrife of battle; when trembled the wide-ſkirted field beneath the ſteps of the terrible Cuthon.---Doſt thou not remember the ſtrife of Cuthon, gray-haired pine of Moruth? It was in the days of thy youth; and thy memory, like the bard's, may have failed. It may have failed; but the light of the days that are paſt, though dim, is pleaſant.

A TALE of the years that will no more return from the dark wandering of their trackleſs courſe over the heath of the deſart.

THE battle of Dargo was over; and the heroes repoſed themſelves on their ſhields. Beneath thy branches, O pine, which then were green, three ſtones, children of the ſtream, reared on high their oozy heads. We bade them tell to future times where we laid the mighty Curach. Beſide him I leaned that night, on my ſhield; when ſleep, like the cloud of Ardven, ſpread over my ſoul its miſt. But the forms of other times beamed on my mind, as the ſun on Cona's winding-ſtream, when the ſhadowy hills are dark, and miſts are on the head of deer. Curach roſe from the midſt of a cloud before me, ſuch as lately he appeared in the field. The fire of battle was ſtill in his eye; and a faint meteor, like a ſword, lighted his path through darkneſs. A blaſt lifted his duſky ſhield; no ſinewy arm was below, to graſp its thong. I knew the ghoſt of

loved Malvina, and every other human friend, this perſonification became neceſſary; and the contraſt between the preſent and paſt days renders it not diſagreeable.---The ſtory of Lugar, or *Dan Liughair*, towards the end of the poem, is generally recited as a detached piece. But as this ſeemed to be its proper place, it was reſtored to it, and a ſentence or two of the other poem tranſpoſed towards the end of it.

of my friend. A while he ſtalked before me, mournful; and often the blaſt had whirled his limbs together; but ſtill he ſeemed like Curach.

"WHY ſleeps Oſſian?" he ſaid, as bending over me, on the breaſt of his blaſt, he leaned: "Should the warriors of Morven reſt, when danger rolls in darkneſs around them?"—He took the pine of Moruth by the head, and ſhook it as he flew. Amids a ſhower of ruſtling leaves, I awoke from my dream, and kindled the flame in the withered oak. The wanderers from the hoſt of Cuthon beheld it, and retired. I called for the ſcout. He came. His ſteps had been over Moruth; he had been viewing the hoſts of the foe.

DARGO they had ſent to the green iſle, where his fathers reſt *. Dark-bending over them ſpreads an aged oak. Its waving branches are worn by the gray moſſy ſtones that lift their head in its ſhade. Bards ſing there to Dargo's praiſe; and the forms of his fathers are ſeen above, dark-muſing, on their miſty clouds. Their red eyes are ſad, for they behold the fall of their ſon.

WITH Suloicha the ſcout, I croſs in ſilence the ſtream of Moruth. We hear the voice of the ſons of Loda, as, three times, they call on the ſpirits of their fear. We hear their ſhrieks going round the ſtone of their power.

"Roll," they ſaid, "ye vapours of Lano, that bring death to the

* This iſle is ſuppoſed to be that of Iona, to which the laſt remains of the Druids, according to biſhop Pocock, had retired. Its ancient name was *Innis-Druinach*, or "The iſle of the Druids." They were in poſſeſſion of it till St Columba fixed upon it for the ſeat of his monaſtery, towards the end of the 6th century. Their burial-place is ſtill ſhewn, at a due diſtance from the conſecrated ground allowed for the repoſe of their Catholic brethren.

the people; roll your dark-red columns on the hill of the foe. Deſcend, Loda, into their dreams with thy terrors. Riſe before them in thy awful form. Spread around the flames of thy lightning, and let the thunder of thy courſe be heard.—Roll, vapours of Luno, round the foe. Loda, deſcend to their dreams with thy terrors *."

NOR ſilent ſtood the gray ſons of other times †, when the children of Loda ſpoke. They called; nor did they call in vain. The friends of Dargo heard them, as they paſſed in their ruſtling blaſt. Enrobed in meteors they came, and ſhone, at times, around Dargo's ſon. Often had the ſtrangers fled with fear from the ſign, like the roe from the hill of heath, when it waves its crackling flames before her. Bounding ſhe flies to the ſecret vale of her wood, nor waits ſhe to look behind. So, often fled the mighty from the danger of the race of Dargo. But no danger did the king of Morven dread, though ſome of his heroes were half afraid.

WE ſaw, as we viewed the foe, the ſon of Dargo by himſelf retired. Now, thoughtful, on his gleaming ſpear he bends. Now he ſhakes

* The Scandinavians uſed incantations ſo much, that, in later times, every ſcrap of their learning and of Runic poetry was ſuppoſed to contain ſome powerful magical charm.—This paſſage is in a different meaſure from the reſt of the poem. The numbers have in them a ſort of wildneſs and ferocity highly adapted to the ſubject and occaſion of them.

A cheo na Lanna!
Uamhar alla,
Air dhath na ſula,
Taoſg o'n chala gun deifinn.
Taom, a Lodda!
Fraoch do chorruigh,
'S lion le oglui'ehd
Aisling 's brollach na Feine.
N am fradharc eirich
A'd chruth eitti';
Torran ſhleibhte
'S lafair ſpeur ga d' cho'dach.
A cheo na Lanna
Anm nan cara';
'S buair an cadal
A chruth Ladda nan leir-chreach.

† The poet here means the Druids. It would appear from the following lines, that they had the art of kindling ſome ſulphureous matter, in order to ſtrike terror into their enemies by that phenomenon. See *Hiſtory of the Druids*, p. 73.

ſhakes his arm, and toſſes on earth his heavy ſpear. Quivering it ſtands. Its ſtuds tremble in moon-beams that glitter through oaken trees. We ſaw the thoughts of battle and of grief ſhake, by turns, his ſoul. The ghoſt of his father came. On a dark cloud that obſcured the moon, he thoughtful leaned. He appeared like the gray-muſing ſon of a rock, when his thoughts are of other worlds *. His red hair ſtreams on winds; and his ſighs are heard, like the voice of the breeze in Lego's reedy banks, when the ghoſts of the dead wander there in mournful miſts, without their fame.

The ſhield of Fingal ſounds. The hills with all their rocks reply. The roes hear it, and ſtart from their moſſy bed. The fowls hear it, and ſhake, in the deſart-tree, their fluttering wing. The wolf, wanderer of night, hath heard it, as he made for the ſlaughtered field, in hopes of prey. Sadly growling, he returns to his den; his hungry eye is red.—Shun his path, ye children of the deer.

We directed our ſteps to the king. Suloicha looked if the gray ſtars had retired in the eaſt. His foot ſtumbled; it was on one of Dargo's chiefs. At the ſide of a gray rock he leaned. Half a ſhield is the pillow on which reſts his head; over it wanders in blood his hair.—Why, he ſaid, do thy wandering ſteps diſturb the warrior's repoſe, when he can no longer lift the ſpear? Why didſt thou baniſh, like a blaſt of the deſart, my dream; for I had ſeen the lovely Roſcana? My ſoul might have fled with the beam of my love; why didſt thou call it back from its flight?

* By this is meant either a contemplative Culdee or Druid.

WHAT was that beam of thy love, Roſcana? replied Suloicha*. Was ſhe fair as the down of the mountain; were her eyes like ſtars that ſparkle through the thin ſhower; was her voice like the harp of Ullin; were her ſteps like the wave of the breeze, when it ſoftly pours on the ſcarce-bending graſs; and her form like the moon ſailing in ſilence from cloud to cloud, in the calm of night? Didſt thou find her, like the ſwan, borne on the breaſt of the wave; lovely, though lonely, in her grief?—Yes, thou didſt; and that Roſcana was mine. Stranger, what haſt thou done with my love?—

"ON the boſom of the wave I found the fair. In her ſkiff ſhe had been ſailing to the cave of her iſle. There, ſhe ſaid, a chief of Morven was to meet her. But he did not come. I ſolicited her love, and invited her to I-una's plain. For three moons ſhe bade me wait. Suloicha, ſhe ſaid, perhaps may come. Faſter than the laſt moon ſhe pined away. Before its light was quite gone, ſhe failed. Like the green pine of I-una, which withered in its youth, ſhe failed: its branches, by the blaſt, are left bare, and the children of muſic forſake its boughs.—On the ſhore of the iſle, I raiſed the tomb of the fair. Two gray ſtones are there half-ſunk in earth. A yew ſpreads its dark branches nigh: a murmuring fount breaks from the ivy rock above, and bathes the foot of the mournful tree. There ſleeps the lovely Roſcana. There the mariner, when he moors his veſſel in the ſtormy night, beholds her fair ghoſt, enrobed in the whiteſt of the mountain-miſt. 'Thy form,' he ſays, 'is lovely, O Roſcana; fairer than my ſails is the cloud of thy robe.'—Such have I ſeen her now in my dream; why was

* *Sulcicha*, "one that ſees well at night;" *Roſcana*, "fair countenance."

was not my ſoul allowed to fly with the lovely beam of light? Come back to my dreams, O Roſcana; thou art a beam of light, when all is dark around!"

Chief of I-una, thou haſt raiſed the tomb of my love! If no herb of the mountain can heal thy wounds, thy gray ſtone and thy fame ſhall riſe on Morven.—Roſcana! haſt thou pined for me? Young tree of Moi-ura, are all thy green branches withered?—The wars of Fingal called me; I ſent the ſcout; but neither his ſkiff nor he have ſince been ſeen. In the morning, my firſt look was on the deep; and in the evening the laſt caſt of my eye was on the main. Through night, my head leaned over the rock; but I beheld Roſcana only in my dream. Chief of I-una!—but thy voice has failed. Thy face, amidſt moon-beams, is pale: thy eyes are flames that are dead. Friend of my Roſcana! thy tomb ſhall riſe.

Like the fall of a lofty oak in the calm gathering of night, when the woods and rocks ſhake with the ſound, the ſhield of the king again is heard. It calls his people together. We bend on our ſpears with the ſteps of ſpeed; our way is by the tomb of Curach.—Who mourns in ſilence on its green turf? he heeds not either the ſhield of the king, or the gray dawn of the morning. It is Coſſagalla. He miſſed his maſter at home. His ears are up, upon his rock: he ſnuffs the wind in all its points: he turns to every breeze that ſhakes the tufted graſs; but his maſter is not there. No ruſtling leaf, no ſparrow's wing in the wood, ſtirs unobſerved by Coſſagalla. But Curach is not come. He ſeeks his ſteps in the battle. He finds his hand on the edge of the ſtream: the foam around it is ſtained with blood. Mournful he bears it with him,

and his ſtream of tears deſcend. He lights, as he walks along, on Curach's grave. On his breaſt, above it, the white-footed dog is ſtretched. Under his neck lies the arm.—I ſee him as I paſs: the tear is in my eye: I think of the white-breaſted dog and Oſcar *.—A moment I lean on the head of my ſpear: the crowding of grief hath ſwelled my ſoul. But I muſt not forget the battle. I ſtep aſide to bring the mourner with me; but he will not come. Three times his howl is heard; his ſoul in the cry is gone. Ah! thou art cold as the clay of earth; no breath is in Coſſagalla. Why this dimneſs of my ſight? My ſoul of battle fails. But the ſhield again awakes it. His heroes are gathered around the king.

LIKE the many rays of the ſun glittering through the watery cloud, when the hunter fears the ſtorm; ſo, thick riſe before Comhal's ſon the gleaming ſpears of Morven and Innisfail. Curach is low. A thouſand heroes look in ſilence on Fingal. Who ſhall have the battle?—Fergus ſtands behind: no field of ſuch fame had yet been his. In his hand he holds his ſpear: without thought he tears away the rough beard of its ſhaft; the mark of its ſtrife in war. His breaſt beats with hope. Battles ſwell in his ſoul: the blood glows in all his veins. His eyes are two ſtars in watery miſt, when

* Alluding to the death of Oſcar, and the grief of Bran on that occaſion; a ſcene ſo affecting, that few paſſages of Oſſian are oftener repeated than that which deſcribes it in theſe beautifully-tender lines, which I may be pardoned for giving in the original, as the tranſlation is already ſo well known.

—Chruinnich iad uime na ſluaigh,
S gach aon neach ri bulrich thruagh;
Cha chaoineadh Athair a mhac fein,
S cha ghuileadh a bhrathair e:
Cha chaoineadh piuthar a brathair,
'S cha chaoineadh mathair a mac;
—Ach iad nile anns a phloſgail,
A gcur-chaoine' mo chaomh Oſcair.
* * * * * *
" Donnalaich nan con rem thaobh,
Agus buirich nan ſean Laoch,
Gul a phannail ſo co ſnitheach,
Snd is mo a chraidh mo chroidhe.
Cha d' fhidir duine roimhe riabh
Gur croidhe feola bh' ann am chliabh;
Ach croidhe do chuibhne cuir,
Air a cho'dacha le ſtailinn," &c.

TEMORA, B. I.

when the night is ſilent, and the winds are retired to the deſart. Over heroes that ſtand between, they view the mild face of Fingal.

WHERE, ſaid the king, is the young eagle that ruſhed ſo late, with ruſtling wings, through the paths of danger? No light ſtaff in a boy's hand was thy ſpear, my ſon; it was no thiſtle's down with which it ſtrewed the field. I ſee its beamy ſhaft marked with the ſcars of battle.—This day, be thou firſt in danger and in fame. Near thee, on his rock, ſhall be the ſteps of thy father: be like the eagle among the fowls of the heath, ſtrong-winged ſon of Morven.—Bid the mighty bow before thee, but bind up the wounds of the feeble. The fame of heroes grows, as fall before them the proud in arms. But if the blood of a low-laid foe is on their ſpear, bards give their name no room in the ſong, and heroes turn away on their gray clouds when their ghoſts appear in the courſe of winds. Fergus, ſpare the low; but when the mighty oppoſe, be thy arm like a grove on fire. My voice on the heath ſhall be a breeze; it ſhall raiſe on high the flame.

LIKE the dark-rolling of a tempeſt, when it ſhakes the deep with all its iſles, and heaves the white-headed billows, like mountains of ſnow, upon the ſhore of rocks; ſo Cuthon with his hoſt came on. The aged hunter hears the ſound, as he riſes in the woody vale, from the foot of a rock, on the moſſy bed where ſlept the roe. He turns about his ear. "It may be the deep murmur of thunder, rolling along the diſtant heath; but I ſee not the lightning, in its courſe, appear.—It is," then he ſaith, "the tempeſt of ocean: I will aſcend the rock and behold its terrors."—He climbs the gray rock; but the face of the blue ſea is calm: the ſun lifts half his face above the

the eaſtern hill; his beams glitter, through the warm ſhower, on the gray beard of the hunter, as he leans forward on his ſpear, liſtening to the growing din.—He ſees the hoſt of Cuthon. "Shall I not ruſh," he ſays to his ſoul, "to the aid of Morven?"—Thou needeſt not, fighter of the wars that are paſt: thou mayeſt wait on thy rock till the ſtrife is over; for the warriors of the king aremany, going down in their terrible joy.—See! Fergus moves with kindled wrath before them, tall as a ghoſt of the deſart, when he comes ſhaking the waving heath with his ſteps. He catches the green groves, as he paſſes, in his hands, and overturns them in his ſport, as the whiſtling boy lops, with his playful ſtaff, the flowers. In his head is the voice of thunder; his eye is the place of the lightning, and meteors form his waving hair. The nations ſee it, and tremble.—So moves Fergus. A troubled cloud behind him move his heroes.

THE battle joins. Moruth ſhakes. The ſound of ſhields, the craſh of ſpears, and the voice of bards, aſcend. Whales tremble on their waves. Roes bound towards the deſart. Fowls, on their ruſtling wings, fly over their mountains; or, trembling, fall with fear*. The white-handed daughters of the bow are aſleep on their mountain of groves: they hear their noiſe, as they paſs thro' pines over their booth: their dreams of danger riſe; they draw their veil over their head, and tremble for heroes.—Nor is your trembling without cauſe, white-handed huntreſſes of Moruth; many

* The Galic reader will wiſh to ſee theſe lines in their native terror.

Le ſgreadail an lanna garbha
'S le caoiribh teine o'n cruaidh arma;
Chuir iad iaſg nan cuantaidh ſluadhach,
Ann an caoilte caola fuara.
Chuir iad feidh nam beanntaidh arda
Gus na gleanntaidh fuara faſail;
'S cunlaith bhinn-fhoclach nan coillteach,
Anns na ſpeuran le crith-oillte.

many of your heroes are low, and ſhall no more purſue the deer.—Many rills wander red on Moruth's heath: many a tall tree ſtrews all its branches there. Heroes lie, like groves overturned by the lightning: their green branches ſhake their ſickly heads in all the winds.

Two eagles ruſh from oppoſite rocks, and fight on the dark pillar of a cloud between. The blaſt toſſes them from ſide to ſide, and the ruſtling of their wings is heard afar by quaking birds. Theſe eagles are Fergus and Cuthon, in the midſt of their ſtrife of ſteel. Long and terrible is the combat of the chiefs; but neither this nor that prevails. A ſon of Loda lifts, at length, his ſpear between. "Why ſhould not," he ſays, "the hawk of heaven feaſt on the ſon of the king?"—Die thou, but not for the hawk, ſaid Fergus, as quick he lifts above him his blaſting ſteel. His head, fixed in the helmet, falls muttering to the earth, and marking, in its way, his own blue ſhield. The body ſtill had ſtood, propped by the pitched ſpear.

Fingal beheld the danger of his ſon, and half he drew his ſword. But ſtill he ſtands in his place. "Why ſhould I deprive the young hero of his fame; why ſhould I make the mother of Fergus ſad on her cloud?—No; beam of my early love, let not thy face be dark; our ſon ſhall yet prevail."

A ghost of other times is riding by, on his wind. He ſees with wonder the terrible ſtrife of the warriors. "They reſemble," he ſays, "the heroes that have been *." He alights from the car of winds. He deſcends with all his clouds, and ſtands on the heath to

* That predilection in favour of former times, ſo common with old men in this life, is here very naturally aſcribed by the poet to a being of another ſtate.

to gaze on the ſtrife of heroes. The ghoſt, with his miſt, hides his ſon from the king; nor did many of the people ſee their chief.

FINGAL trembled for his hero. He ruſhed in all his terrors from his place; like the boar of Gormul, when, wandering on the heath for food, he ſees the ſteps of the hunter towards the place of his young. The rocks hear his voice, and ſhake with all their branchy trees.—So ſhook the voice of Fingal the rocks of Moruth; and his bard poured before him, like the roar of a red mountain-ſtream, the ſong.—Morven kindled, like the decaying fire, on the heath of Lora, when the ſpear of the hunter ſtirs it, and all the winds are awake. It ſpreads its flames from hill to hill: its columns of dark-curling ſmoke, with all their thundering noiſe, aſcend. Ghoſts ſport in its clouds, and paſs through the darkneſs of its flame. The roe hears its ſound at a diſtance. She thinks of her ſon in his moſſy bed. The big tear trickles from her eye. She flies to look for his ſafety.

THE people of Cuthon fled, or fell. We purſued them over the ſtream of Moruth. Cuthon himſelf ſtood, wounded, in his place, like a rock which the ſea hath half-conſumed below. The mariner, as he paſſes, fears its fall, though ſtill it ſeems to defy the ſtorm.—He ſaw the coming of the king, and graſped with joy his ſpear. But Fingal ſaw his blood, and would not lift the ſword. Sullen, after his people, he retired. His ſteps are ſlow through Moruth. The furtheſt bank is ſteep. Its face he thrice attempts to climb; but thrice in the attempt he fails. He clings by a withered thiſtle; but it yields.—Backward in the ſtream the mighty falls!—Moruth ſounds along its winding courſe, like the fall of rocks with their

ſhaggy

ſhaggy woods, when the thunder rolls above them in clouds, and the valleys, with all their herds, are trembling.

We flew on our ſpears to aſſiſt the chief: but his face was pale, and the darkneſs of death was gathering about him, a night without moon or ſtars.

And art thou fallen, ſaid Fingal with a ſigh, art thou fallen, who haſt this day been ſo mighty?—How fleeting is the life of the warrior!—In the morning he goes forth to ſtrew the plain; but his friends receive him a clay-cold corſe at night!—His aged mother and ſpouſe of love prepare the feaſt, around the blazing oak. At times, they liſten for his return. The tread of feet is in their ear; the pale moon points out the crowd. "He comes!" they ſay, as with joy they ruſh forth.—They meet his bier!—The life of the warrior is a wintery day; ſhort, dark: its ſtreaks of light on the heath are few.—Fergus, bid the friends of Cuthon take him. Bid them alſo, this night, partake of the feaſt of Fingal; the deer of their own hills are diſtant.

Cuthon heard the king, and reached his hand; while a few words trembled on his lips. "Fergus, take thou that ſhield; Fingal, king of heroes, be thine the rod *. My ſoul mounts on the meteor's wing † to the abode of the brave and good. With my

* The Druids, and moſt other pretenders to ſupernatural power, are ſaid to have worn a white rod, called *Slatan druï'achd*, i. e. *the Druid's rod*, or *magic wand*. The virtues aſcribed to this weapon were ſo great, that we may ſuppoſe it would not be forgot in a day of battle. But whether it is this precious wand, or his ſpear, that Cuthon is here reſigning to Fingal, cannot be determined with certainty, though the firſt is moſt probable from the name in the original:

Gabhſa Fhear'ais mo ſgia
'S aig Fionn nam fiann biodh an t *ſlat*.

See *Hiſt. of the Druids*, p. 10.

† Tha m'anams' *air rioluin* a triall
Gu ionada fal nam flath.

That ſouls on their departure from the body take their flight to the other world in ſuch vehicles, is an opinion which ſtill prevails, in ſome meaſure, among the

fathers let my body be placed: let our reſt be together in the green iſle."

WE move to the feaſt along the heath. We diſcover through the trees, the ſteps of age. It was the feeble hunter on the rock; he who trembled for Morven's heroes. Thrice had he tried to toſs the ſpear on which he leaned, and thrice his ſighs aroſe. He felt the trembling of age on his hand, and ſaw his locks white with the ſnow of years, as with them he wiped away the tear that dimmed his ſight.—But when the danger of Morven grew, his youth returned, and all the thoughts of feeble age were forgot. He ran to aid them from his rock. He ſaw, when he came near, the ſtrife was over; and returned again, low-humming the ſong, to his wood. The robe of other years, we ſaw, had failed. His worn-out ſhield and gray beard, ſupply along the breaſt its want. Behind, it is alſo torn; but the ſkin of a boar conceals the rent. —"Bring," ſaid the king, "to the needy this robe; and bid him come with our people to the feaſt."—"The garment," he replied, "the gift of the king, I take; but cannot wait, this day, for his feaſt."

FINGAL knew the voice of Lugar; he knew the gray dog of his friend. He went with his wonted joy to meet him; but bade his people ſtand away, that the aged might not bluſh.—Chief of Moi-allin, he ſaid, where ſo long haſt thou been? I rejoice to ſee the friend of my youth. A hundred fair cows, with all their calves, thou gaveſt me then on Drimcola's heath. Twenty horſes alſo were

the vulgar Highlanders, who generally believe that certain meteors, to which they give the name of *Dr'eug*, portend the death of eminent perſons. This Druidical notion, with ſeveral others, owes its long continuance to the frequent repetition of Oſſian's poems.

* The

were thy gift, the children of the rein; and five ſhips, ſafe riders of the ſea, with all their ſails and nodding maſts. The like boon, Lugar, ſhall now be thine. No generous deed ſhall ever be forgot by Fingal.

I AM not Lugar, the aged replies: I had rather die without a friend to lay me in the narrow houſe, than take the bounty, due only to him, in his ſtead *.

—"To thee it is due; and thine ſhall be the gift. But firſt thou ſhalt, for ſeven days, prolong in Selma the feaſt. Seven heroes ſhall then guide thee home. They will remain in Moi-allin to ſmooth the road before thy aged feet; to ward off every rougher blaſt that might toſs thy gray hairs."

FINGAL led the aged by the hand. We purſued our way with the people of Cuthon, to the feaſt. A gray ſtone met us on the heath; and the words of peace were heard from Lugar.

* The attachment of Lugar to his friends was great, when it made him forget all the feebleneſs of age, and ruſh down, with the ardour of a youthful warrior, to battle. But his modeſty under his reverſe of fortune, and the ſpirit with which he bore his poverty, are more ſtriking features in his character. The generoſity and delicacy with which he is treated by Fingal are no leſs remarkable. *Dan Liughair*, or "the ſong of Lugar," beginning with

La gan deachaidh Fionn do thigh Le'ir
Bu lionar ann ceir agus fion, &c.

is ſtill a favourite of all admirers of ancient Galic poetry; and is ſo ſure to meet with the approbation of the hearers, that a ſentence to that purpoſe, ſuppoſed to have been firſt ſpoke by ſome Culdee, or ſon of the rock, to whom Oſſian repeated it, is generally added to it.

"Mile beannachd dhuit gach re,
Oſſian fheilidh is binne gloir;
Arſon aon ſgeoil co maith blagh
Sa dh' airis thu riabh red' bheo."

The modeſt ſhyneſs of Lugar is ſtill highly characteriſtical of the generality of his countrymen, who wear the beſt face in the world under the galling load of oppreſſion and the pinching rigours of poverty. With the greateſt induſtry they conceal from all about them how ſmall a *handful of meal is in the barrel*, giving cheerfully away, to the very laſt, a ſhare of it. And there have been frequent inſtances of nobody's knowing that the *little oil in the cruiſe* was ſpent, till the lamp of life, for want of a ſupply, was quite extinguiſhed.

* The

" Why," he ſaid, " ſhould they who go together to the feaſt meet in battle any more? Why ſhould the voice of ſtrife be heard among the race of thoſe who reaped the field together, in the years that are long ſince paſt; among the race of thoſe who now ride, hand in hand, upon their clouds; never ſad but when they ſee the war of their ſons. Raiſe this gray ſtone, the daughter of the rock, on the heath of Moruth. The children of the years to come ſhall mark it. They will aſk the aged warrior what it means. ' Lead me,' he will ſay, ' to the place.'---With ſhort, equal ſteps, they walk beſide him. The blunt ſpear ſupports his hand; and his gray dog, blind with years, attends his ſteps. The evening is calm. The ſong of birds is in the woods; the voice of hinds is on the hill; but the aged hears them not. The ſun is bright as it goes down. He half-ſees the parting beam: its rays are glittering in his few gray hairs. In two white, parted locks, like mine, they hang before him, as he lowly ſtoops, and wave around the blunted ſpear.—He hath reached the place; he hath felt, with joy, the ſtone. ' It is,' he cries, ' the ſtone of Moruth!—Here,' leaning to it his weary back, he adds, ' here your fathers met in peace: they laid their hands together to rear this gray ſtone. Forget not, children, the peace of your fathers; remember it when you behold the ſtone of Moruth *'—Speak, O ſtone, to the years that

* The cuſtom of ſetting up ſuch pillars to ratify agreements and to commemorate them, ſeems to have generally prevailed among ancient nations. We find frequent inſtances of it in Scripture: (ſee Gen. 31. 51. and Joſh. 24. 26.) The *Hermæ*, Fauni, Termini, all the Mercurial heaps and pillars among the ancient Greeks and Romans, and thoſe pillars which the old Ethiopians and Arabs held in ſuch veneration, had probably the ſame origin. The exceſſive regard paid to theſe objects, and the cuſtom of calling them to witneſs their moſt ſolemn proteſtations, led men by degrees to think there reſided in them ſome divinity. The little heaps or mounts called *Si'-dhuin*, or *hills of peace*, ſo frequent in the Highlands,

that wander beyond the ſun, and ſhall not for ages come forward to hear its morning voice: tell them, and the children who ſhall behold them, that here we bade the battle ceaſe.—Let the moſs of years cover thee, thou ſign of peace on Moruth; let the ghoſts of the dead defend thee. Let no unfriendly hand; no ſtormy blaſt, while Moruth's heath ſhall laſt, or that dark ſtream ſhall run, come nigh thee!"

THE night was ſpent in the feaſt. With morning the people of Cuthon retired. The bards raiſed the mournful ſong to their chief; nor were the harps of Morven ſilent.

CUTHON! thy arm was mighty, and thy ſoul of battle great. Often have I ſeen thee hover, a dark cloud from ocean's miſt, above the field of thy fame. But now I ſee thee not; though at times I hear thy blaſt in the gray hair of Moruth's pine. I hear thee, when I ſit beneath it, as now, in the gathering of the evening ſhades, and liſten to the murmur of the paſſing ſtream.—Sweet is thy nightly ſong, O ſtream; ſweet is thy hum in the wandering of thy courſe.

BUT it is late, and the bard will retire from the ſtorm of night; for the ruſtling wing of the heath-cock, lighting on his moſſy bed, is heard. Is not that his voice, bidding his mate to haſte her home?—Mate of mine! Evirallin! the time hath been when thus I cried, from my booth, to thee. Now I cry; but there is no friend to anſwer, ſave the mimic rock, and the voice of the hollow ſtream. Fingal is with his fathers. Oſcar is no more. Evirallin is

lands, are ſtill approached with awe, and ſuppoſed to be inhabited by *genii*.—They were generally ſituated on the boundaries between different clans and poſſeſſions; and probably contributed much to maintain among them peace and good neighbourhood.

† In

is in her cloud; and the voice of Malvina is ſilent *. My fathers, when ſhall Oſſian be with you? My friends, when ſhall the the bard join you? When ſhall the ſhort days, the long nights of my many-coloured life be over? My friends are gone: their memory, like the ſtones of their tomb, is half ſunk; and the place of their abode is deſolate.

BUT ſuch changes are not the lot of the bard alone. Lugar! thou haſt had thy ſhare. I have ſeen the heroes feaſt in thy hall. Thy lights of wax were many; and plentiful was thy feaſt of ſhells. Though a cold, ſhapeleſs ruin now, thy palace was then the abode of a king †.—Such have I ſeen the dwelling of Lugar. But as the warm ſeaſon, in the rolling of years, is changed; Lugar wandering, with his ſpouſe, in want again was ſeen.—I paſſed through Moi-allin's vale ‡: but the houſe of Lugar was empty. The

* In the following poem Malvina is a ſpeaker; ſo that it ſeems to have been compoſed before this.

† The whole contraſt of this paſſage is beautiful; but the two lines of which this ſentence is a tranſlation are exceedingly ſtriking, as the oppoſition is ſo quick, and a group of intereſting images are ſtrongly painted in them, with only a ſingle touch.

Ged tha e 'n diugh na aibhiſt fhuair,
Bha e uair a b' aros Righ!

‡ Perhaps there was never any language better adapted for poetry than the Galic, as almoſt all its words are not only energetical, and deſcriptive of the objects they repreſent, but are alſo, for the moſt part, an echo to the ſenſe. Harſh objects are denoted by harſh ſounds, in which the conſonants greatly predominate; whilſt ſoft and tender objects and paſſions are expreſſed by words which bear ſome analogy to them in ſound, and which conſiſt, for the greateſt part, of vowels. Hence, in the hand of a ſkilful poet, the ſound varies perpetually with the ſubject of diſcourſe, and aſſumes the tone of whatever paſſion he is at the time inſpired with. Any perſon acquainted with the Galic, will ſee the juſtneſs of this remark, from the different ſpecimens inſerted in the courſe of theſe notes. It is generally ſo obvious, that a ſtranger to the language may obſerve it, notwithſtanding the number of quieſcent conſonants which oppreſs the Galic. In p. 244, for inſtance, the " hoarſe-roaring of a wave

The kid of the roe fed on its green top where inward it fell, in the hall of heroes. The owl, in his window, covered her head with the ivy-branch; and the ſwallow fluttered around her. The deer cool their ſides in the ſtream before his door; and ſeem as if they were muſing on his lot.—Sons of the mountain, have you ſeen Lugar? Ah! you are glad, for his ſhafts will no more diſturb you.—But yourſelves, like him, ſhall one day fail. Your companions will look for you in the vale which you uſed to haunt. Your ſons will ſhake their heads, for they know not where to find you.

VARIOUS, O life, like the ſeaſons of the year, are thy changes! Once, I ſmiled in the ſummer of youth; and laughed, like thee, tall pine, at the winter's ſtorm. My leaf like thine, I ſaid, ſhall always be green, and my branches in age ſhall flouriſh. But now my withered arms are bared of all their leaves; and my gray hair, like thine own, is the ſport of winds, and trembles in every blaſt.

TALL

wave on a rock" is deſcribed by words which preſent the letter *r* in almoſt every ſyllable:

——— ſtairirich
Meaſg charraige cruaidh a garraich.

And a ſimilar idea is expreſſed much in the ſame manner in p. 247:

Gan ruaga le ſtoirm toirt nualan
A'r carraig chruaidh meadhon-barach.

On the contrary, any perſon who turns his eye to the ſpecimens in p. 145 and 202, where the poet is under the influence of ſome of the ſofter feelings, will find the moſt predominant ſounds to be *ei, ao, aoi, eo, eoi*, and the like.—The original of the paſſage which gave riſe to this note, is added as a further illuſtration of the remark. Grief is the predominant paſſion in it; and *ai, iu, ua, uai*, &c. are the predominant ſounds.

A' ſiubhal gleannan na Moi'aluin
Fhuaras na ſhafach tigh Liughair,
Minnein na h earb' air a dhruim uaine,
'Sa ſuaine ſinte 's an fhardaich aoibhein.
Na uinnaig bha lan na h oi'che,
'S eigheann a' cuir duibhr' air aghaidh,
An gaothan ga chuartach; 's na ciar-aighean
Beul a thighe 's an t ſruth, fui ſmuairein.
A ſhliochd nan ſleibhte, 'm faca ſibh Liughar?
Ach 's cubhaidh gur ait leibh nach beo e.
Ach failnichidh ſibhſe mar eiſin,
'S biaidh ar daimhich aon latha gar feoruich.
Crathaidh ar clann an cinn le ſmalan;
Cho'n aithne dhoibh gleann ar co'nuidh!

TALL pine of Moruth, we have once ſeen better days; but they have fled, on their darkly-ſilent wing, over the heath to the deſart.

THE

THE FALL OF TURA:

A POEM*.

THE ARGUMENT.

FINGAL, on his return from an excurſion which he had made to the Roman province, is received by the congratulatory ſong of the virgins in his palace of Tura. While they are at the feaſt, a bard arrives to intreat the aid of Fingal in behalf of Civa dona, whoſe ſtory is told. In the morning a part ſet out on this expedition, while the reſt purſue the chaſe, leaving only the women and children at home, with Gara to attend them hard by, in caſe of any alarm or danger. Unfortunately the houſe took fire, while they were aſleep; and all that were in it periſhed. This loſs is deſcribed, and pathetically lamented, by Oſſian; and by Malvina, to whom the poem is addreſſed in the beginning, and who bears a part in the end of it.

WHO comes, pouring his voice on the night? Art thou a ghoſt that haſt not received thy fame? Is thy wandering ſtill on the vapour of the fenny miſt; and doſt thou come with thy complaint to Oſſian's ear?—Pour thy voice, then, ſon of night! my ear, within its gray lock, leans forward to thy tale. Pour thy voice, ghoſt of night! that the bard may know thy name.

* This poem is known by the names of *Loſga Taura*, and *Laoidh Ghara's nam ban*, "The burning of Tura," or "The elegy on Gara and the maids of Morven." The unfortunate accident which it records, partly accounts for the ſudden decline of the bard's family and friends.—The latter part of the poem is generally repeated as a ſeparate piece, by the title of *Oſſian a' caoi' nam Fiann*, "The lament of Oſſian for his friends."

THE ſound comes, growing on the wing of the rolling breeze. It comes, like the ſigh of the mountain-ſtream that falls, between trees, from the height of rocks. It riſes from its dark bed, at times, through the miſt of foam, and reaches by halves the ear of the hunter. "Lora!" liſtening from his booth he ſays, "the voice of thy weary ſtream is ſweet; I love the murmur of thy ſteps through the rocky vale, though it often foretels the ſtorm."

YES, hunter of roes, the evening voice of Lora is ſweet; but ſweeter far is that in Oſſian's ear. It is ſoft as the ſound of departed bards in the gale of the reed. It is ſoft and mournful, as the ſong of Malvina when ſhe ſees the ghoſt of Oſcar: the evening is calm, and the breeze ſcarce waves the down of the lonely thiſtle. —It is ſhe; it is the love of my Oſcar; Malvina, lonely bird *. She comes, like the moon on her ſolitary mountains, when her ſteps in clouds are ſlow, and her face through thin miſt is pale. She comes, fair light, to mourn for her ſiſters' fall. Their place is dark: the mark of their footſteps is loſt, as the courſe of the ſtars that fell from their blue place in heaven; as the moon when ſhe has retired within her dun robe in the ſky.—Yes, Malvina, their place is dark; and the ſteps of thy grief, on the hill of heath, are lonely.

DAUGHTER of Toſcar, bring my harp. Kindle the ſoul of the bard with thy voice of ſongs. Awake it from the ſlumber of years: the night of age is unlovely and dark. It is dark, Malvina; but thy ſong is a beam of light. Its ſound is pleaſant, as the harp of ſpirits

* Malvina, of whom Oſſian ſpeaks ſo often in his poems, was the love of his ſon Oſcar, who died when he was very young. (Temora, B. i.) Oſſian always treats her with peculiar tenderneſs and affection; which ſhe requited, to the very laſt, with the moſt dutiful and attentive regard.

* The

ſpirits on their gale, when they are ſeen at noon, on their white ridgy miſt, creeping along the ſilent-winding ſtream. Thy voice is pleaſant: join it to the harp: pour it on my ear, through night, Malvina, lonely bird!

The times that are paſt roll back, with their dim light, on the ſoul of the bard.

We returned in our fame from the field of Arda *. The ſteeds of the ſtranger ſtrode beneath us in their pride; and we rejoiced in the greatneſs of our ſpoil. The ſetting ſun was yellow on the groves of the mountain; its beams on Tura were like the gold of the ſtranger. The face of the lake below is calm. The children admire the hills that hang beneath it, with their ivy-rocks in the midſt of woods. They wonder to ſee the blue ſmoke of Tura, there, deſcend. The virgins of Morven ſtand, like rainbows, upon their mountain. They ſee the ſteps of our return; and in the joy of beauty they move to meet us. The ſound of their hundred harps is up. The ſongs of muſic, mixed with theſe, ariſe.

"Who comes," they ſaid, "in the light of his ſtrength; who comes gleaming in his ſteel? The ſteed of the ſtranger is proud beneath him: he paws with ſcorn the earth, and toſſes on high his gray mane. The clouds of ſmoke, like the blue curling pillars that riſe from Tura, fly, ſnorting, from his noſtrils; and from his mouth hangs the foam of the ſtream. His neck bends on high, like the bow of the battle; and his two eyes are flames.—Who holds the glittering reins of the ſteed? who but Fingal, king of men?—Thy fame, O Fingal, is brighter around thee than ſun-beams; in

* The moſt of this paragraph, with ſome others that follow, particularly before and after the ſong of the old bard, have been ſupplied from the tales, as the verſification is broken and defective.

* The

its light thy thouſands rejoice. The ſmile of peace is on their brow: they are calm as the ſmooth lake. They are as the river of Cona in the evening of ſpring, when the children of the ſtream leap in air for the buzzing wing.—But they that are calm in peace, were a tempeſt in the ſtrife of war. Before them, ſtrangers of the diſtant land! you have fled: in their preſence, kings of the world! you have trembled. Your warriors, without their ſteeds and bright arms, return. 'Where,' you ſay, 'have you left your arms?'—Aſk the ſons of the mountain, they beſt can tell. Your own men are ſilent; they are aſhamed: no bard gives their name to the ſong; no virgin comes, with her harp, to meet them. No; they weep in their ſecret halls, for their lovers have given their fame to Fingal. Yes, virgins of the diſtant land, you may weep: kings of the world, you may tremble. But Morven's maids will rejoice; with the voice of ſongs and the harp they will hail their heroes †."

SUCH was the ſong of Morven's maids in the day of their joy; when the gladneſs of their face was like ſetting ſun-beams on the mountain of groves, and their peace like the green leaf of the oak, when it hangs, unſhaken, over Lubar. Nor did your harps ſleep that

† The religion, laws, and cuſtoms of the Caledonians, had all a tendency to inculcate their grand maxim of *behaving valiantly in war*. Such eſpecially was the tendency of theſe congratulatory ſongs of their fair ones when they returned in triumph. With the ſame view of animating them to a gallant behaviour, the ladies often followed them to the field of action, where they were ſometimes more than mere ſpectators. In the paſſage cited in the *Note*, p. 300, concerning the death of Oſcar, there are, in almoſt all the editions I have met with of that piece, two lines (there marked in Italics) which intimate that their women were then preſent. The practice of other ancient and neighbouring nations gives a further probability to this cuſtom, ſo different from the manners of modern times. See Lord Kaims's Sketches, B. i. Sk. 7.

* Hoſ-

that night, O bards, on the walls of echoing Tura. Their joyful, trembling voice is up. Their ſound at a diſtance is heard. The red oak is in a blaze; the ſpire of its flame is high. The traveller ſees its light on the duſky heath, as night ſpreads around him her raven wings. He ſees it, and is glad; for he knows the hall of the king. 'There,' he ſays to his companion, 'we paſs the night. The door of Fingal is always open. The name of his hall is, The ſtranger's home *."

THE feaſt is ſpread. The king wonders that no ſtranger from the darkly heath is come. "I will liſten," he ſays, "if I may hear their wandering ſteps." He goes. An aged bard meets him at the door. On leſs than half a ſpear he leans his bending weight. No ſteel glitters on his blunt ſpear: for the days of his ſtrife are paſt; his battles are all fought, and their noiſe is over.

THE king, with joy, led the ſtranger in. We ſaw his grief-red eye bedimmed with tears: we ſaw their path on his furrowed cheek. His few gray hairs hang, a thin, twiſted lock on either ſide, and mingle with the white beard on his breaſt. A youth ſtands behind him: his down-caſt face is the bed of grief: he bears the harp of the bard.

WE riſe to give the ſtrangers place. We bid them partake of our feaſt that ſmokes around. We bid the light of our joy dif-

* Hoſpitality is one of thoſe virtues which loſe ground in proportion as civilization advances. It ſtill ſubſiſts to a high degree in the Highlands; though vaniſhing ſo faſt, that, in ſome years hence, its exiſtence in ſome parts may be as much doubted as that of ſome other virtues aſcribed by Oſſian to his heroes. It is not many years ſince it was the general practice to look out every evening, whether any ſtranger appeared, before the doors were ſhut. When any had caſt up, the hoſt had manifeſtly more pleaſure in giving, than the gueſt in receiving, the entertainment.

Sed tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.

* Si-

diſpel their cloud of grief, and ſhine through the miſt on their ſoul. But they were like the gray cloud of the morning, which climbs not half the mountain, though the ſun in his brightneſs ſhines around.

THE aged, at length, took his harp, and poured in our liſtening ear his ſong.

" SITHAMA was a chief of other lands. His halls lifted their heads on Gormluba's banks, and ſaw their gray towers in its blue winding ſtream. Mountains ſpread their arms around the place, and aged woods defend it from the ſtorm. Here, fifty times, the oak dropt its withered leaf on Sithama's head; and as oft bade he the people mark how faſt their days decline. ' We wither,' he would ſay, ' as the graſs of the mountain; we fade as the leaf of the oak. Four are the ſeaſons of life, and reſtleſs they roll as thoſe of the year. Some fall in youth, as the bud that is killed by the blaſt: others are like the leaf over which the mildew hath paſſed in the ſultry day. Many fall, like my departed love, in the ſickly autumn; and a few remain, like myſelf, till the winter of age. Since our ſeaſon then is ſo uncertain, let us be renowned, he would ſay, while we may *.'

" The deer of his own hills ſufficed Sithama: he ſought not to drink, ſave of his own blue ſtream. When the feeble ſought his help,

* Sithama ſeems to have been of the ſect of the Druids. His parabolical manner of conveying inſtruction is agreeable to the moſt ancient times, and to thoſe ænigmatical apophthegms which Laërtius aſcribes particularly to the Druids. If the whole of this order were obnoxious to Fingal, their confidence of his readineſs to redreſs the wrongs done even to one of them, and the alacrity with which he undertook it, reflect the greateſt honour on his character. The higheſt heroiſm is to be above revenge, and to ſubdue one's enemies by kindneſs.

help, his blade leapt out of its dark ſheath, and ſhone in their aid. The helpleſs ſtaid behind his ſhield, and ſaid, Here we are ſafe.

" The ſtrife of friends aroſe. Duarma ſeeks the fall of his brother. The injured obtains Sithama's aid. But the gloomy Duarma prevails. Talmo falls in blood; and Sithama, the friend of the feeble, fails!—Duarma comes to Gormluba's ſtreams. The ſon of Sithama is young. He admires the boſs of the broad ſhield on the wall, and aſks how the ſpear of battle is lifted. Over the heath he ſees the ſtrangers come, as night deſcends upon the grove. Short, but faſt, are his ſteps to meet them: for Crigal had the ſoul of his father; he rejoiced in the preſence of the ſtranger, as the green branch in the ſhower of the ſpring. He ſees the face of Duarma dark; but he reaches his little hand. ' The feaſt,' he ſays, ' is ſpread; why ſhould thy face be mournful?' Duarma makes no reply; but his ſpear on high is lifted. The youth attempts to fly; but alas! he flies in vain. Acroſs the threſhold of his father he is ſtretched. His ſoul comes, red, through the path of the ſpear.—His ſiſter, from her window, ſees Duarma's wrath. What ſhall the helpleſs Civa-dona do?—' Aged bard, canſt thou not help me?' —The withered arm of the bard is propped by half a ſpear.—She wildly turns her to the other ſide. The window is there, from which virgins oft beheld their face of beauty in the flood. From its height ſhe throws herſelf into Gormluba's ſtream. The bard with his harp goes, trembling, to the door. His ſteps are like the warrior of many years, when he bears, mournful, to the tomb the ſon of his ſon. The threſhold is ſlippery with Crigal's wandering blood; acroſs it the aged falls. The ſpear of Duarma over him is lifted;

lifted; but the dying Crigal tells, 'It is the bard *.'—A gray dog comes howling by, and in his ſide receives the ſpear.—The hall is on fire. Its flames are moon-beams in the vale. The bard ſeeks Civa-dona with their light, and finds her clung to a branch that wandered acroſs the ſtream. Crigal is laid in his ſilent bed, and Civa-dona is clad in his robes. She goes with the bard to ſeek for aid.—King of Morven, the unhappy two are before thee; give the young and the old thine aid."

THE bard ceaſed. The burſt of his grief aroſe. With the virgin-ſiſters of Morven Civa-dona retired. She retired, like a ſtar behind its cloud, after its watery face hath ſparkled a little through the ſtorm. In her brother's robe, where it veiled her head, we ſaw the marks of Duarma's ſpear.

THE tear ſtarts into the eye of the king. With his gray lock he wipes it off. His heroes forget the feaſt. "Reach me," ſaid Freſdal, "my ſpear."

"THE day lifts above the hill his gray head †. Our courſe ſhall be to Ardven's chaſe. Ten heroes ſhall viſit thence Duarma's hall: and the youth who wins her love, ſhall remain with Civa-dona."

WE flew, light as ghoſts when they retire from day. Gara alone remains at Tura; that no wandering foe may alarm our maids.—Daughter of Toſcar, why that burſt of grief? Their hall is the houſe of joy yet. Dry, then, Malvina, thy tears, and give the reſt of the tale to the ſong.—The ſong of grief is a ſtream, O Malvina! It melts the ſoul of the mighty, and carries it along in its darkly courſe. Its murmur, though ſad, is pleaſant.

DOST

* The character and perſon of the bard were always held ſacred even by the moſt unſparing cruelty. † Fingal ſpeaks.

DOST thou not remember, Malvina, the beauty of the ſtranger, when the brightneſs of the day aroſe, and the ſun ſhone on the heathy hill? Yes; for thou didſt attend her, on thy ſteed to Ardven, and then purſue the chaſe with the king. It was then we beheld the beauty of Civa-dona, when thou didſt retire, like the moon, behind thy mountains. She ſhone, like a bright ſtar over the broken edge of a cloud; but who could admire that ſtar, when the full unclouded moon was ſeen?—Yet the ſtar of Gormluba was fair.—White were the rows within her lips*; and like the

S f down

* The poet carries the deſcription of this lady to an unuſual length, either to divert, for a little, Malvina's grief; or to pay the greateſt compliment he could to her beauty, by giving ſuch a portrait of one whom he allows her to have ſo far excelled. The original is beautiful; but has had the misfortune to be conſidered as only ideal; inſomuch that it has got the name of *Aiſling air dhreach mnai*, or "The viſion of the beautiful woman." Such as think it a treſpaſs, will, it is hoped, forgive the inſerting it here, for the ſake of its admirers.

Innſeam pairt do dhreach na reul:
Bu gheal a deud, gu hur dlu.
'S mar chanach an t ſleibhe,
Bha a cneas fa h eide' ur.
Bha a braighe cearclach ban.
Mar ſheachda tla 's an fhireach,
Bha da chich air a h uchd ciat'ach:
Be'n dreach ſud miann gach fir.
Bu ſhoithe' binn a gloir,
Sbu deirge nan ros a beul.
Mar chobhar ſios ra taobh
Sinnte gu caol bha 'lamh.
Bha 'da chaol-mhala mhine,
Du'-dhonn air liobh an loin.
A da ghruaidh air dhreach nan caoran,
'Si gu hiomlan ſuor o chron.
Bha a gnuis mar bhara-gheuga
Anns a cheud-fhas ur.
A ſult buidhe mar orra-ſhleibhte;
Smar dhearſa greine a ſuil.

A later poet has been ſo ſtruck with this deſcription, that, on hearing it, he naturally expreſſed his deſire of being made happy by ſuch a beauty; "for whoſe love he would render more than love; for whoſe regard he would render more than regard; and always maintain an affection, which in the longeſt revolution of days and nights, he promiſed, ſhould neither decay nor abate."—As theſe lines are in the ſame meaſure with the deſcription of the lady, they are generally repeated along with it, as if they had been originally joined to it.

'S truagh nach miſe am fear,
Annir nan roſg mall,
D'an tiubhra tuſa gradh
Is bheirinn a dha da chionn.
Bheirinn gaol thar ghaol,
Bheirinn gradh thar ghradh;
Bheirinn run thar run,
Is mein thar mein a ghna;
'S nam biodh do chroidhe neo'fhuar,
Gun ghluaſad as a chaoidh',
Bheirinnſe dhuit gradh
Nach crionadh a la na dh'oidhch.

down of the mountain, under her new robe was her ſkin. Circle on circle formed her faireſt neck. Like hills, beneath their ſoft ſnowy fleeces, roſe her two breaſts of love. The melody of muſic was in her voice. The roſe, beſide her lip, was not red; nor white, beſide her hand, the foam of ſtreams.—Maid of Gormluba, who can deſcribe thy beauty! Thy eye-brows, mild and narrow, were of a darkiſh hue; thy cheeks were like the red berry of the mountain aſh. Around them were ſcattered the bloſſoming flowers on the bough of the ſpring.—The yellow hair of Civa-dona was like the gilded top of a mountain, when golden clouds look down upon its green head, after the ſun has retired. Her eyes were bright as ſun-beams; and altogether perfect was the form of the fair.---Heroes beheld, and bleſſed her.

WE reached the hall of Duarma; but he was fled: he had heard of the fame of Morven. The elbow of his father leaned on a gray ſtone, as he lay along it on earth. His head hangs down on his hand; and his gray beard is ſtrewed in duſt. His ſighs are deep on the wind; and his dim, tearful eye is red. He hears the ruſtling of our feet near Talmo's tomb.---" My ſon, my ſon," he cries, " it is pleaſant to be ſo nigh the tread of thy ghoſt!"---We felt for the aged; we left him a part of the ſpoil.

WE reached the place where Sithama dwelt: but it was dark and deſolate. The fox ſtarted from its ruins; and the owl reſted in the cleft of its broken wall. We looked for the window from which the fair had eſcaped; but it was fallen. The white ſtream leapt, roaring, over its heap of ſtones. We ſaw where the threſhold had been marked with Crigal's blood. It had reſted in the hollow that was worn in the ſtone by the frequent foot of gueſts.---Civa-dona

was

was ſad; but we left Freſdal to cheer her: it was he who had won her love.

Fingal ſtill waits us on Ardven. There we partake of his feaſt of deer.---Night comes: ſleep deſcends: ghoſts riſe with all their mournful forms in our dreams. The harps of their bards are like the ſong of the tomb; their ſound comes to our ear like the mountain-ſigh, when it is heard from afar before the ſtorm. Over us, in dark ſhapeleſs miſt, they hang. The blaſt in frequent eddies comes: it rolls before it all their limbs. But ſtill the forms return. They bend over us, leaning from the breaſt of their cloud; and often they heave the ſigh.

The ſleep of the king was fled. Thrice had the faint howlings of ghoſts awaked him. He aſcends the hill to hear their words. He looks about him from the height. He ſees the curling pillars of ſmoke aſcend to the ſtars: he ſees the ſpiry flames lift their dark-red head on high, above his hall. His ſhield is ſtruck: his voice is up. "Tura flames through heaven!"

With the thunder we ſtart, at once, awake. We fly like lightning over the heath of Colra. Its dark ſtream meets us in the vale. Each bounds over it, on his ſpear, with ſpeed. The ſon of Ratho tumbles from the height of his. "Heed me not," he cried; "but fly: fly faſt, and ſave my love."—In the current, twice he lifts his white eye above the ſtream: but, the third time, he ſinks and dies.

We came to Tura; but it was too late. The flames were hiding, in dark-red aſhes, their head: the ruin falls, in heaps, above the dying coals. The door, half-burnt, is ſtill ſhut; as the daughters of Morven left it, when they had retired to reſt, in the midſt

of their joy. O why did they not find the way to it, when the flame of the kindled heath awoke them!—No morning, with its calm voice, ſhall ever diſpel your ſlumbers, daughters of the mountains! The voice of the lover, no more, ſhall ſay "Awake."

WE turn to the ruin our back. We bend, in ſadneſs, over our ſpears; and loudly bewail our loſs.—Our hundred helmets, and our hundred boſſy ſhields; our coats of mail, and ſwords of light; our hundred hounds, the young children of the chaſe; our ſtudded reins, the rulers of proud ſteeds; and all our banners, red-green meteors that ſtreamed in air;—all theſe, were, that day, forgot; no hero remembered they were in the hall.—The burſt of our grief was for our hundred fair, and for their little ſons; that young grove of trees, growing in their robes of green, in the ſhowery ſun-beams of the ſpring.---They were young trees; but the flame catched their green heads, and laid their beauty, amidſt aſhes, low.---Malvina, fair light! it is not without cauſe thou art ſad; for all the bright beams that attended thy courſe are extinguiſhed. One mournful grave contains the remains of thy ſiſters.

WE ſtood all day, like the dark ſtream which the ice hath bound in its courſe on the mountain of cold.---The darkneſs of night would return unperceived, if a voice had not awaked us from our grief.---It is the burſt of the voice of Gara. We look for him in the tower where he had reſted; but he is not there. His voice aſcends from a cave. The ſad mourner there is ſtretched in grief. ---In the troubled dreams of his reſt, the crackling flames had aſſailed his ear; he thought the foot of the foe approached. With a louder craſh the roof falls in. The ſhield of the king, he thinks,

thinks, is ſtruck. At once he ſtarts awake. His hair had been caught in the opening end of the beam on which he ſlept: he leaves it there, with all its ſkin. He ſees Tura low: he knows not that his blood, a red ſtream, deſcends. His pain, amidſt his grief, is forgot. "Virgins of my love, I will not ſurvive you," he ſaid as, expiring, he fell on the heath *.

NOR didſt thou die alone, O Gara: the days of many other heroes, in their darkly-ſilent heath, were few and mournful. They pined away like green leaves over which the mildew hath paſſed: they ſink in ſilence amidſt the moſſy heath of the hill. Like ghoſts that have not received their fame, they ſhunned the voice of joy †. They retired to their caves when roſe the ſound of gladneſs.

MAL-

* The *ur-ſgeuls* give a different account of the death of Gara, and relate ſeveral ſtrange ſtories concerning him, ſuch as his having been beheaded on the thigh of Fingal, &c. but theſe tales are manifeſtly late and ſpurious, and therefore rejected.

† The melancholy ſtate allotted, after death, for ſuch as had not "received their fame," muſt have ſtrongly excited thoſe who believed it, to diſtinguiſh themſelves by ſuch brave and virtuous actions as might merit the praiſe of the bard. We juſtly laugh at many of the ſuperſtitions of our forefathers: but as, in the progreſs of all ſtates, ſuch a period muſt be, we have alſo reaſon to admire the wiſdom with which the Druids managed this engine, ſo as to make it generally ſubſervient to the intereſts of ſociety.---The ſuperſtructures of ſuperſtition, like very old towers, appear now odd and fantaſtic, as well as extremely incommodious; but they were uſeful in their own day, and moſt of them well adapted to the neceſſity of the times.

The firſt Chriſtian miſſionaries, in theſe countries, were ſo ſenſible of the advantage to be derived from ſome of theſe ſuperſtitions, among men who were not yet ripe for bearing the clear light of truth, that they did not ſo much attempt to ſtop their ſource, as to turn them into a new channel. With them, for inſtance, whoever was not initiated into the Chriſtian religion by baptiſm, was forced to wander after death, a mournful ſolitary ſhade, in the ſame ſtate as formerly thoſe who had not "received their fame." It was a notion in the Highlands till of very late, that the faint voices of children who had died unbaptized were heard in the woods, and other lonely places, bemoaning their hard fate.---All countries, as well as this, had once their ſuperſtitious æras; only they are the happieſt, which have got the ſooneſt through them.

MALVINA †! my cauſe of grief is great. Thou haſt loſt thy ſiſters, fair lights upon the mountains; but I ſurvive the race of heroes. I ſearch for them with my hands among the ſilent ſtreams which they uſed to haunt; but their tomb is all I find. Alas! the children of the years to come ſhall not perceive even this; they will ſeek it on the mountains, but ſhall not find it.—The chief of the days that ſhall be, will ſtand on the green hill where Tura was. Cona rolls below him in its pebbly bed. Its ſtream wanders, loſing its way, through woods; herds, along its banks, are ſeen to ſtray. Blue Ocean trembles at a diſtance. Iſles lift their green, frequent heads, above its wave; and the bounding mariner is ſailing towards the coaſt.—"This ſpot," the chief will ſay, "is lovely: here raiſe for me, in view of whales and roes, the lofty houſe."—They dig the green mound; the mound where Tura roſe. Spears, half-burnt, lift before them their heads; broken ſhields, amidſt aſhes, begin to appear. "It is the tomb of heroes," he will ſay; "ſhut again the narrow houſe." He calls the gray-haired bard, and aſks whoſe memory is contained in the tomb. The bard looks around for the light of the ſong: but his ſoul of age is dark; his memory has failed. He looks for his companions; but he ſees their tomb. He ſtands, perhaps, a ſolitary tree like Oſſian.—A ſolitary tree am I,

† What follows of this poem is generally repeated by itſelf under the title of *Oſſian a' caoidh nam Fiann*; but as it ſeems to have been originally a part of *Loſga Taura*, it is here reſtored to it. The great number of names, towards the end of it, occaſions ſuch a difference in the recitation of that part, as made it impoſſible to determine the true liſt with any degree of certainty. The catalogue of names, when repeated by itſelf, begins generally with theſe lines:

So far aon faca' mi n Fhiann,
Chunncas ann Cian agus Conn,
Fionn feio is Oſcar mo mhac,
Raoini' Art is Diarmad donn.

I, O bard, on the lone mountains; its companions, one by one, have forſook it: drooping, it mourns their departure.

MALVINA.

AND are not the ſiſters of Malvina, likewiſe, green trees that have failed? Yes; and no young plant, in their room, is growing. The virgins are no more, and my cauſe of wo is great. In the day I look for them; but no trace of their ſteps is to be found, ſave the green tomb with all it ſtones of moſs. In the ſeaſon of night I mourn for them; but they are lights that have retired from their blue place in the heavens. I am like the gray ſtar of the morning, when, ſickly and pale, it mourns behind its companions. It mourns for a little, but its own light will ſoon grow dim. The huntreſs, riſing on the heath, ſhall look up, but ſhall not ſee it. "We too," ſhe ſays to her companion, "one day ſhall fail."

OSSIAN.

THE heart of Oſſian is ſunk in the night of his grief. It is like the ſun in his dark-cruſted cloud: no ray of light burſts through the gloom: no ſmile alights on the mountain-top; the ſilent valley, around its dark ſtream, is mournful.—The heroes have withdrawn their light, which ſhone, like the brightneſs of my arms, around me.

MALVINA.

THE lights around Malvina have alſo failed. My heart is like the moon when her darkneſs grows. I draw, like her, my veil over my face, and lament my ſiſters in ſecret. Yes; fair lights, I will not forget you, though you have hid yourſelves in darkneſs: your memory is mournfully-pleaſant.

Os-

OSSIAN.

NOR can I forget you, rulers of the ſtorm of battle, though you now reſt in your peaceful ſlumbers. Your image ſtill dwells in my ſoul, though I ſhall ſee you no more, as once I have done, on the brown heath.—Here have I ſeen Fingal, king of men; Oſcar and Ryno, beams of light; Artho of beauty, and the dark-brown hair of Dermid. Here have I ſeen the ſon of Lutha, the meek; and that ſoul without guile, Conchana; with the ſon of Garo the bold, the three Finans, and Fed. Here burniſhed the helmet of Eth; here whiſtled in winds the dark locks of Dairo; and here ſtreamed, like banners, the red hair of Dargo. Here Trenar grew like an oak; Torman roared like a ſtream; Ardan ſtalked in his pride, like a tree lifting its green head above the valley of miſt; Murno and Sivellan, beſide him, ſmiled over blue ſhields. Cleſſamor of mighty deeds was here; and here the poliſhed ſteel of Fercuth. Here aroſe the voice of Carril; and here thouſands liſtened to the harp of Ullin. Here have I ſeen Moran and Fithil of ſongs; Connal of ſoft words and generous deeds; Lamdarga with his ſpear of blood; and Curach, whoſe arm was an hoſt in the hour of danger.—And where art thou, Lugar, whoſe door was never ſhut; where is now thy voice, Fadetha of the loudeſt cry? where, Ronuro, are thy golden locks? where, Colda, are thy feet of deer? and where, Lumna, thy ſpear of battle? Where is mildly-looking Ledan; with Branno of arms, and Toſcar of youth? Where are the hunters of the boar on Gormal, Machrutha, Colmar, and Comalo; Fillan, my brother of love, and ruddy Fergus of the mildeſt ſpeech? Where is Crugal, blazing in his ſteel; and Dogrena, the light of heroes on the plain? Where, Aldo, is now thy beauty? and where,

Ma-

Maronnan, the ſtrength of thy blue ſhells? Who will ſhew me the ſteps of Duchomar, the black but comely; or the face of Crigal, beam of love? Suino, Sorglan, and Conloch, have alſo failed; the three mountain-ſtreams in our battles. Connal, the meteor of death, is no more; nor Gaul, the whirlwind by which our foes were ſcattered.—Heroes of my love, you have failed; none of you remains to ſhed the tear on the tomb of Oſſian. No friend ſhall raiſe my gray ſtone, or prepare, on the lonely heath, my narrow bed. No; the heroes of Morven have all failed. But their memory ſhall dwell in the ſoul of the bard.

MALVINA.

SISTERS of my love, you have alſo failed: but in the ſoul of Malvina you ſtill remain. My departing breath ſhall be a ſong in your praiſe.—Yes, Evirchoma, Darthula, Sulmina, I feel your warm beams paſs often over my ſoul. They are like ſun-beams of autumn, when they fly over the dark-brown heath of Lena; and the watery bow, with all its tears, is nigh.—Gellama, Moina, Minona! you once ſhone on theſe hills, though dim is now your beauty. Melilcoma, Colmal, and Annir, did your form of comelineſs continue! or are you, in your thin clouds, ſtill admired by heroes? Crimora, has thy beauty laſted! Gelchoſſa, where are the ſteps of thy lovelineſs?—Derſagrena, what is now become of all thy brightneſs? and where, Oi-thona, doſt thou pour thy voice of love? Like the harp of the bard, when the chief of the people is dead, it was ſweetly-mournful.—And, why ſhould you be forgot, Evirallin and Clatho, faireſt of all the lights that have ſhone on Morven! Joy is a ſtranger in Selma, ſince you have ſet in darkneſs: the ſongs of virgins ever ſince have ceaſed; and the harps of the bards

are ſilent.—But the tears and the voice of Malvina would fail.—Fair beams! you have left your ſiſter mournful.—Dimly ſhe ſhines upon the ſolitary mountains, and her ſteps are lonely. Pale and ſickly is her countenance, as the face of the moon when it appears in heaven, a gray cloud, in the ſeaſon of the ſun, after all the ſtars of its courſe have retired.---Siſters of my love! you are ſtars that have failed; but your memory is ſtill with Malvina.

OSSIAN.

* CEASE, Malvina, from thy tears. Thou makeſt the aged ſad. As the night on her wings is almoſt paſt, ſo the night of our grief will ſoon be over. It is like the dream of the huntreſs of the roe, in the cleft of her rock. In thought ſhe falls from the height of hills: ſhe alights in the ſtream below: her ſoul, like the white-breaſted bird of the ſtream, is now above, and now beneath the flood. She cries to her love, but he cannot come nigh her: her ſoul flies on clouds: ſhe ſees him behind her, mournful at the tomb of her reſt. She longs for his coming, for ſhe is ſad.—Her own ſigh awakes her: ſhe lifts her head beneath her rock; and the dream of her terror is over.—Such a dream is our life, huntreſs

* In this place there is ſometimes repeated a paſſage which ſeems rather to have been the opening of ſome other poem than any part of this. As it is tender and beautiful, I ſhall here give the tranſlation of it.

Oss. Why flow thy tears like the ſtream of the fountain; why ſighs thy voice like the gale of Lego?

MALV. Doſt thou aſk the cauſe of my grief, when the thiſtle grows in Selma, and the bats dwell in the houſe of Fingal? I liſtened to a noiſe in the blaſt; but it was not Cuthullin's car: I ſaw a beam of light on Lena; but it was not the ſpear of Oſcar.---Oſcar! thy ſpear is a dweller of the tomb, and thy ſhield is become dim in Selma? I ſaw its boſs; but it was covered with miſt, and its many thongs had failed.

Oss. Love of my Oſcar! we too ſhall fail, and Selma itſelf in its green tomb ſhall moulder.---But the ſlumbers of the tomb are ſweet, O Malvina! let not thy ſoul grieve for thoſe who dwelt in Morven. They have been beams that ſhone in heaven for a ſeaſon, and their path was marked with day.---

reſs of woody Cona. Our friends, before us, ſhall ſoon awake us. In the voice of the reedy gale, doſt thou not already hear them ſay, " Malvina and Oſſian are ſoon to join us."—Malvina! their ſound to me is pleaſant. It is like the murmur of Lora to the traveller of night, when he comes, wandering, over the deſart. His face is towards Selma; but it is hid in darkneſs. No light but the ſtormy meteor is ſeen on the heath. The narrow-winding path on the brow of the mountain is loſt; and the ſhriek of ghoſts is heard around. At length he hears the voice of Lora, leaping from its broken rocks. His joy returns. " Selma," he ſays, " is nigh!"—Such * is the joy of Oſſian wandering in dark-

 neſs,

* This paſſage and one or two more of the ſame kind, ſeem to riſe ſomewhat higher in ſentiment than the general ſtrain of theſe poems. As this, in the opinion of many, may render their antiquity more doubtful, I have here inſerted the original, in order to give ſuch as underſtand it a fair opportunity of judging for themſelves. Some of the lines, it is poſſible, may have been altered or interpolated; but as the moſt of them, from their antiquated air and obſolete expreſſion, are manifeſtly old, I was loth to reject any of them upon a mere ſuſpicion. Paſſages of this nature aſſume a very different look in a tranſlation from what they have in the original, as they muſt be ſtript of their ancient garb, and dreſſed out in thoſe expreſſions that are appropriated by modern compoſition. Beſides, as all metaphors do not run equally well in all languages, nor the ſame images tally in one tongue ſo well as in another, ſeveral alterations muſt be made in order to give the ſtyle an uniform look. Some ſmall variations, on this account, have been made in the paſſage before us; particularly, the words rendered " the light of our joy ſhall not be darkened," are in the orginal " the light of our joy ſhall gleam as the blade of Luno." The genius of the Engliſh language requires frequently a little ſoftening of thoſe images which appear natural and unaffected in the Galic.

'Sco ait is ſiu Oſſian anrach
Ri claiſdin cugar nan taibhſe
Ga chuiſre' gu talla a ſhinnſir,
Aite-co'ail nan caomh air iontrain.
Ann talla nam flath am bi bron,
Ne faoi le deoir air a ghruaidh,
An t athair an caoi' an t Oſcar,
Sam mair oſnai' Mala-mine?
An ſpionar Aoibhir-aluin o Gradh,
No'n loi-gear aros nam Fiann;
An ſgarar na cairdean o cheile,
No'n dealuigh an t eug gach diais?
A reul na maiſe! ni h amhluidh,
Ach dealruidh mar lann an Luin ar ſollus;
Arn aoibhneas mar an fhairge cha traigh
Scho'n fhailnich mar aghaidh na Geliaich.
Ar caoimh mar ſholluis a chaochail
'Sna ſpeura faoin os ar cionn
Cha bhi nis mo; ach taomaidh
Le ceol aobhach an aitesl tharuinn.
---Inghean Theſcair, uiſeag at aonar
Leig air faondra mata do thuirſe.

neſs, when a voice tells him, that, ſoon, he will reach his fathers. —Malvina, ſhall we not then meet the friends for whom we mourn; and, in their converſe, again rejoice?—Shall there be any grief dwelling in the clouds; ſhall there be any mourner there? ---Shall the father, in that place, loſe his Oſcar; or Malvina mourn over the tomb of her love?---Shall Evirallin, there, be torn from her Oſſian; the hall, like Tura, be burnt; or the friends by death be divided?---No; fair beam! the light of our gladneſs ſhall not be darkened: our joy no more ſhall waſte as the moon, nor ſhrink as the ſea, and retire. Our friends, no more, ſhall be ſtars that forſake their blue place, and leave their companions mournful. No: they will always attend us in the joy of our courſe; they will pour their light and their glad ſong around us. ---Give, then, thy tears to the wind, daughter of Toſcar! ceaſe from thy grief, Malvina, lonely bird!

CATHLAVA:

CATHLAVA*:

A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

RONNAN having ſent his ſcout to aſſiſt Sulmina in her eſcape from her father's houſe, looks for her in vain all night. In the morning he conſults an old Druid, from whom he learns that ſhe had been intercepted and carried off by Lava, to whom her father had formerly promiſed her in marriage. Ronnan, with his followers, purſues Lava, and lands in the night upon his coaſt, where he meets with an old man, to whom he had early owed his life, and to whom he makes himſelf known after he had heard his ſtory. Next morning, the two parties having engaged, Lava is ſlain; and Sulmina, who out of concern for Ronnan had come to the field in diſguiſe, is found there, after the battle, mortally wounded. Ronnan, having eſtabliſhed his old friend Runma in Lava's poſſeſſions, returns home; carrying with him the body of Sulmina. The poem is addreſſed to the ſon of Arar, who appears to have been a young bard.

THOU ſitteſt by thine own blue ſtream, ſon of Arar; thy harp lies ſilent by thy ſide: why doſt thou not praiſe the departed? Around thee, they hover on clouds, dark-bending over the place of their reſt. But no voice is heard, ſave that of the ruſtling breeze, and murmuring brook. Why ſo ſilent, ſon of Arar? Doſt thou not know the ſons of fame are around thee?

" THOU knoweſt the fame of the departed, Orran† ! the deeds of

* *Cathlava*, " the battle of Lava." This poem is ſometimes called *Dan an ſhir leidh*, " the ſong of the gray man," from the appearance made in it by an aged Druid.

† Since the order of the bards has ceaſed, almoſt all the ancient Galic poems are aſcribed to Oſſian. To the moſt, and beſt of them, he is juſtly entitled; but as this ſeems to be only an imitation of his manner

of other times are ſunbeams around thy ſoul. Take then the harp, and let the bard of youth hear the ſong, that he may pour its light on future times. So ſhall their names be not forgot on their hills when thy harp is hung in thy ſilent hall; when thy voice of muſic is ceaſed, like the gale when it ſléeps in the trees, in the calm evening of autumn."

My voice indeed ſhall ceaſe, and my harp ere long be ſilent; but their fame ſhall not be forgotten. Thou mayeſt liſten to their praiſe, ſon of Arar, and leave it to the bards of the years to come.

On theſe hills lived Dumor of ſpears; his daughter of beauty moved graceful on his hills. Her harp was the joy of his hall. Lava ſaw the maid, and loved her. His arm was ſtrong in the wars of Dumor, who promiſed him the fair Sulmina. But the maid refuſed her love, and gave her ſoul to Ronnan;—Ronnan of the fair hair and mildeſt look, whoſe dwelling ſtood by the ſtream of Struthorman. He heard of Sulmina's grief, and ſent his ſcout to bring her to his hills.

She went with the ſon of night: but Laya met her on the heath. An oak and a thouſand thongs confine the ſcout: a dark-wombed ſhip receives the maid. Loud were her cries, as they bounded over the ridgy deep: "Ronnan, relieve me; O Ronnan, relieve thy love!"

But he hears thee not, hapleſs maid! By the ſide of a ſtream he ſits, thinking thou doſt come.

"What detains thee, Sulmina, ſo long? What keeps my love from the ſtream of her promiſe? I liſten, but hear not the ſoft tread

manner, the name of Orran is here retained, though that of Oſſian is no leſs frequently uſed by thoſe who repeat it.

Co b' fhearr fios na thu fein, *Oſſian*, air beus na dh'fhalbh? &c.

tread of thy foot; it is but the breeze, ruſtling in the aged tree of Senar. Come, my love, like the roe to meet her companion: why are thy ſteps ſo ſlow on the heath of Gormul?

THE night is long without my love. Why ſtand ye ſtill, ye travellers of the blue ſky? Have you forgot to run your courſe; or are you, like me, waiting for your loves?—Sun of the morning, why doſt thou forget to riſe; why doſt thou ſleep ſo long in thy eaſtern chambers?—I know it; thou haſt met with thy Sulmina; for I ſee not her ſteps in the heavens. Yes, you are together, fair lights! with your children, the leſſer beams, in their green, trembling beauty, around you In your chambers of clouds, you are together, and there the night is ſhort. But, here, it is long; for the blue eye of Sulmina is abſent.—Lift thy yellow head from thy eaſtern cloud, ſon of the morning! Shine on the path of Sulmina, O ſun! and bring her to the hill of her promiſe.

THE gray-dark morning comes. The ſun ſhines; but it brings not his beloved. He ſees a cloud riſe before him. It aſſumes the form of Sulmina. His arms are ſpread; he flies to graſp the ſhape. But a blaſt, dark-ruſhing from the mountain, comes. Its path is through the form of Sulmina.

RONNAN feared the ſign. He went to the aged Senar *. Under

* *Sean'ar*, "the man of age." He appears to have been a Druid, living in his grove of oaks. His appearance is in the original ſo awful and ſtriking, that the poem, as already obſerved, takes frequently its name from it.

An crith-thaice ri luirg fein,
Fuì' gheig dhoilleir dharaich,
Lan ogluidheachd:— a' crom-aomadh,
'S fheaſag aoſda ſios mu bhrollach.
—Air lar tha ſhuil a' dearcadh
Ach anam ann co 'radh thaibhſe.

The reply of this oracle is clear and laconic,

Macan ann ſas cruaidh,
Barca, thar cuan, na deann;
Shuilmhine! 'scruaidh leam do ghlaodh,
A 'taomadh air tuinn gun ſhurtachd!

It was from this pretenſion of the Druids to ſupernatural knowledge, and from the many

der the awful ſhade of his oak he finds him, leaning on his own trembling ſtaff. His head of age ſtoops to the ground; his gray beard hangs down on his breaſt, and his dim eyes are fixed on earth. But his ſoul is mixed with the ſpirits of air, and his converſe is with ghoſts.

WHAT ſeeſt thou of my love, ſaid Ronnan; what ſeeſt thou of Sulmina?

I SEE, ſaid the aged, a youth tied to an oak: a veſſel rides the wave. Sulmina pours her voice on the ſea; loud are the ſhrieks of the helpleſs.

SAD is thy tale to me, ſaid Ronnan.—Thou haſt not heard its ſadneſs all, ſaid Senar.

MOURNFUL the chief retires. With his ſpear he ſtrikes the gathering boſs. A hundred youths hear the ſound, and ſtart, amidſt roes, from their beds of heath. We poured from all our hills to the ſtream of the chief. We paſſed the night in ſilence, for great was the grief of Ronnan. The voice of no harp was heard; the ſound of no ſhell went round; no feaſt was ſpread; no oak gave its glimmering light, on that night, on the heath of Struthorman. Cold, drooping, and dark we ſat, till day aroſe in the eaſt. With morning we ruſh to the deep; and virgins, with grief, beheld from behind their rocks our flying ſails.

BUT what are thy thoughts in the morning, Dumor; when no daughter of beauty looks, blue-eyed between her yellow locks, within thy darkened hall?—The daughters of the bow conveened on the dew of the dawn. They moved forth to the chaſe, like fun-

many paſſages of this kind in the ancient Galic poetry, that the notion of the *ſecond-ſight*, which ſo long prevailed in the Highlands, took its origin.

ſun-beams on the hill of the eaſt. They came to the ſecret hall of Sulmina, but it was ſilent. " Daughter of Dumor, art thou not yet awake? Thou didſt not uſe to be the laſt on the hill of roes. Awake; ariſe: the ſun is coming forth; and the ſtag, riſing in his bed of moſs, is ſtretching all his limbs. Daughter of Dumor, lift thy locks; this day we move forth to the chaſe of roes.——But ah! ſhe is not here!"---Their ſighs, like the ſhrill voice of the breeze, travel to the ear of Dumor.---Thy grief, Dumor, on that morning was great; but greater far was thine, O Ronnan!

NIGHT is gathering on the deep. The ſhore of Lava appears like miſt. In the ſilence of night we reach its bay.

DARK and cold was that night, ſon of Arar; and unſheltered was the place of our reſt, in the land of ſtrangers. The obſcured ſtars were ſeen, at times, through their torn robes of clouds. Some obſerved their colour of blood, and feared the ſign. Frequent was the howling of gray dogs; nor unheard were the ghoſts of our fathers. They looked out, at times, from their dark-ſkirted cloud; but their countenance ſeemed to be mournful.

RONNAN ſat by a moſſy ſtone. The ſhield of Struthorman hung above him, on a gray branch. The winds whiſtle through its thongs.---I ſung, beſide him, the tales of old, and the deeds of his father, when he fought, on the coaſt of Ullin *, with Commar of many hills.

—CEASE, ſaid the chief, thy ſong, till the day ſhall light me to

* *Ullin*, Ireland, or, more ſtrictly, Ulſter.

Lava; for my wrath is kindled againſt his race, at the mention of the wars of Ullin. It was returning thence his father purſued the deer of our hills, and fought my early death. I was young; I could lift no ſpear, nor draw from its ſheath the ſword. One of his men had pity on my youth; he ſaved me from Lava's ſpear. Our arms are ſtill in his halls; my father did not live to demand them.

—But what low and broken voice is that from the heath? Doſt thou not perceive that aged warrior drawing near? His one hand ſeems guided by a child; on a ſpear, that ſeems a burden, leans the other. Every little rill ſtops his pace, and on the withered furze the aged ſtumbles.---Who art thou, aged wanderer of the night? Why ſo late on the lonely heath? Haſt thou loſt the delight of thy ſoul; or haſt thou cauſe of wo, like me?

"I thought I heard a voice. Thou knoweſt, my child, the voice of thy father. Was it not he, bidding me to follow him to the place of his repoſe?"

"No; for I loved my father's voice, and I love not that which I hear. Their arms are like my father's arms; but their voice is like the voice of ſtrangers."

"And doſt thou ſee their arms? Then fly, my child; for they are ſent by Lava. Fly thou; and, if they will, let them ſlay me: for the place is good; I feel the tomb of thy father."

The child with terror flew. The aged, trembling, ſtood. He ſtood, like the dun red-creſted fowl of the heath, when the hunter, unperceived, comes nigh her brown ſons. Quick, ſhe bids her

her little children fly, to hide their heads in moſs; and calls the danger to herſelf, till they are ſafe.

Peace be to the aged, ſaid Ronnan, as he took him by the hand. Peace be to the child, ſaid I, as in my arms I took him back. We are not come from Lava; neither do our ſwords bring death to the feeble. No, their ſafety is behind our ſhields: therefore reſt thou here, and tell the cauſe of thy tears.

" Here I will reſt: here is the clay-cold dwelling of my ſon. To mourn over it am I come with his child. How ſilent under this peaceful ſtone art thou now, my ſon; thou whirlwind in the ſtorm of battle! Silent is thy tongue, and weak thy arm: thy beauty is decayed, like the faded flower; and thy ſtrength, like the withered oak, hath failed. Lamor! where is the boaſt of man, when the clod is become thy fellow? Only one ſun hath run his courſe ſince thou didſt, like him, rejoice in thy ſtrength, and gladden the dim eyes of thy father. Like him too, darkneſs, thick darkneſs, forms now thy covering. Yet his light ſhall return, and he will again lift his dewy locks in the eaſt, and rejoice. But when ſhall thy long, long night, my ſon, be over; when ſhall the ſlumberer of the tomb ariſe from his ſilent dwelling? But thou lifteſt thy head, my ſon, in other lands; and wandereſt over brighter fields with heroes.—Weep on, O ſtrangers! for he that is low was brave; and his ſoul, like your own, was a ſtream that flowed when the tale was mournful."

Weep for him we do, ſaid Ronnan: but how is he fallen ſo ſoon; was it by the hand of Lava?

" It was; and for no other cauſe, but that he loved the friendleſs. But in this my ſon was like his fathers. It was the mark of our

race, that we always ſtood up, though alone, to defend the weak. Our ſhield was a rock of braſs before the unhappy; our ſpear was a tree that ſheltered the ſtranger.---When I was ſtrong in my arms of youth, as the tenant of this tomb was yeſterday, I attended the father of Lava, when he took the ſpoils from the halls of Struthorman. My words were loud againſt him; for the heroes were abſent, and there was none to oppoſe him. One child indeed there was, who ſcarce could wield, in place of a ſpear, a little arrow. That ſame he heaved, with all his infant-might, againſt the foe. On the foot of Commar the blunt end of it, harmleſs, fell. The gloomy chief turned his eye upon the child, and ſaid, 'Hereafter this child may lift a more dangerous ſpear againſt us. Let us leave him on that deſart iſle, where we wait the morning's light.'—— We came to the iſle; and often was the ſpear of Commar half-lifted over the ſon of Struthorman. My ſoul was grieved for the child of youth. He heard my ſigh, and came near me. He admired the brightneſs of my arms; he claſped his little hand about my knee. He ſmiled in my face: the tear glittered in his blue eye. 'My father!' he ſaid, 'I love thee.' My heart melted above him: my ſoul within me was like the ruſhing of a ſtream; like the ſtraitened whirlwind in Atha's cleft, when trees in the ſtorm are bending. My ſecret tears fell in his yellow locks, as he hid his head in the ſkirt of my robe. As the roe, when ſhe fears the hunter hath obſerved her haunt, the moſſy bed where ſhe hath hid her ſon,—or as the eagle of heaven, when ſhe thinks that he hath ſeen her rock,—carries off, in the night, her young; ſo I took the child in my arms, when failed the light. I bore him through the waves to his mother, who wept like the cloud of the

ſhower,

ſhower, upon the lonely ſhore. She gave me this ſpear, and called the name of her child Ronnan *. But of Ronnan have I heard no more, till Lava came from the wars of Dumor, and told the mournful maid of his love, that he had left him wounded by the ſtream of his land.---My ſon knew my love for Ronnan. ' I wiſh,' he ſaid, ' I had been near to lift the ſpear of Struthorman. It would rejoice to defend its owner.'---His words came to Lava's ear. His people gathered around my ſon at the feaſt.---This grave may tell the reſt. Mark it, ſtrangers; and when you paſs, ſhed over it a tear, and ſay, ' This is the tomb of Lamor.'---Yes, and it will ſoon be the tomb of Runma. But if ye know the friends of Ronnan, bring them that child, that they may defend him; and give them this ſpear, for they will know it."

THE ſigh burſts from the breaſt of Struthorman's chief. He falls on the neck of the aged. " In me thou haſt thy Ronnan!"

THEIR tears fall, mingled, on the grave of Lamor. Heroes drop their ſpears, and weep, with joy, around them.

---BUT what noiſe is that, like the ſullen murmur of a ſtream, when the ſtorm is about to burſt? It is the foe with their numerous hoſt. They have perceived our coming, and their ſteel faintly glimmers to the dawn of the morning. Their light is like the thin ſtream of a rock, when ſun-beams, burſting from between two clouds, are travelling through it.

RONNAN hears the ſong of battle, and the joy of his countenance

* *Ro'-thonnan*, " through waves;" alluding to the manuer of his eſcape. He may have, probably, been the father of that Ma'ronnan (or *ſon of Ronnan)* mentioned in Oſſian's battle of Lora:

Freiteach bliadhna ri mur Fhinn
Thug an diais bu chaoin dearg dreach,
Deagh Mhac-Ronnain nan ſleagh geur,
Is Aildhe nach d'eur neach.

nance returns. He ſtrikes his ſhield. His heroes are around him, a thick cloud, the gathering of the tempeſt on Dura.

As the ſpirit of night moves, with the collected blaſt of heaven in his courſe, when he prepares to pour his force on the groves of Ardven; when oaks hear its ſound at a diſtance, and, trembling for its approach, already ſhake their leaves: So ruſhed Ronnan to the battle on the head of heroes.---Nor leſs terrible is the courſe of Lava. The ſound of his people is like thunder in clouds, when Lara's fields are diſmal. A thouſand helmets nod on high; like a grove in flames is the blaze of ſpears.

But who ſhall tell the rage of battle? Thou haſt ſeen, ſon of Arar, two black rocks rolling from oppoſite hills to meet in the valley below; a cloud of ſmoke riſes behind, and follows the tract of each: ſuch was the terrible onſet of the people. Swords claſh, and ſhields reſound: heads and helmets fall: the dead are mixed with the dying: blood runs in a thouſand ſtreams, and the ſpirits of fallen heroes aſcend on its thin airy ſmoke. See! to the edge of every cloud they cling, as clings the bur to the eagle's wing when ſhe leaves the valley of dun roes, and flies to Moma's cloudy top.

But what eagles are theſe two, that ſtill contend with ruſtling wings on the heath? No gray kid, no red-creſted cock is the prey for which they ſtrive, as from ſide to ſide they bound, and pour death in ſtreams from their ſteel.—See! one ſtoops on his knee. His ſhield ſupports the half-fallen chief, as the rock ſupports the pine, which the ſtorm has half-overturned on Dunora.—Yield thy ſpear, ſaid Ronnan; reſtore my beloved Sulmina. I ſeek not the death of my foes, when they lie before me on earth.

Yield

YIELD I muſt, Lava replied, for my blood is ſhed; the ſtream of my life hath failed.—Sulmina muſt be thine. Behind that rock, in her cave ſhe reſts. She looks down from its door on a blue ſtream, where waves an aſpen tree.—Sulmina muſt be thine: but let her raiſe my tomb; for ſhe was the love of Lava the unhappy.

He ceaſed. He ſunk on his ſhield; and his people fled. Ronnan bade us ſpare them in their flight, as, ſwift, he aſcended the rock to find the place of his love.—The blue ſtream he finds; and the cave on its woody bank. But no Sulmina is there. The lone wind ſounds in the empty womb of the rock. The withered leaf wanders there, on its ruſtling wing; and no tract is found, but that of the lonely fox.

"WHERE art thou, O Sulmina, my love! Doſt thou hide thyſelf from Ronnan?—Come, Sulmina, from thy ſecret place; come, my love, it is thy Ronnan calls thee!"

BUT thou calleſt in vain, ſon of grief; no one replies to thy voice, ſave the rock and echoing ſtream.

AT length the howling of his dog is heard, in the field of fallen heroes. Thither he turns. There he finds Sulmina. She had ruſhed to the battle to aid her Ronnan. But death, on the point of a wandering arrow, came: its barbed head is in her breaſt of ſnow. The ſparkling light of her eye is become dim; the roſe of her cheek is faded.

RONNAN, pale like her own half-breathleſs corſe, falls on her neck, as drops the ivy when its oak hath failed. Sulmina half-opens her heavy eyes. The peaceful ſhade of death cloſes them again, well pleaſed to have ſeen her Ronnan.

LONG

LONG we bended our heads in ſilent grief, and ſhed our tears around Sulmina. At length the ſlow ſteps of Runma came. He ſpoke the words of the aged.

" WILL ſorrow recal the dead; will the cries of the living diſpel their heavy ſlumbers? No; they ſtill ſleep on, careleſs of the cry of the mourner. But they are only gone a little before us to the land of their reſt. A few more fleeting days, on their ſilent, ſwift-gliding ſtream ſhall paſs, and our ſteps ſhall be in air with our friends. Do you not already ſee the cloud-ſkirted robe prepared for Runma. Nor ſhall Ronnan be long behind. The ſtream of grief waſtes the bank on which his beauty grows. The young tree, that lifts there its green head, already half-bends over it in its fall. Let, then, our deeds of fame be many, while we can; and let not our winged days be waſted in mourning——Grief is a calm ſtream, O Ronnan! the ſteps of its courſe are ſilent. But it undermines in ſecret the beauteous flower that grows on its green bank: drooping it hangs its withered head; it falls while its leaf is but tender *."

RONNAN aroſe; but ſtill he was ſad. He gave the halls of Lava to

* The following lines have in the original all the beauty of the objects which they deſcribe, and all the ſmoothneſs of the ſtream which they ſpeak of. Such ſoft and mournful ſounds as *oi, ai, ui, iui, uai*, &c. occur ſo often in them, that the eye or ear, of even a ſtranger to the language, will at once perceive that they are expreſſive of ſome of the mournful and tender feelings. In this reſpect they are an illuſtration of the remark made in a former note, p. 310, 311.

Tha Bron mar an ſruthan diamhair
Aig iarruidh fui' iochdar na bruaiche;
Tha 'n gallan cheanadh ag aomadh,
A thog ri thaobh a gheugan aillidh,
Tuiteadh ar bron, mata, 's eireadh ar cliu,
'S ar n uin' a' ruith air barraibh ſgiathan.
S' ciuin, a Ronnain, ceime a bhroin,
'S e caithe gu foil a bhilidh uaine;
Tha 'n t ur-ros air a chaithe fui' bhonn
'S gu trom, trom, tha cheann a' ſeargs.

to Runma and the ſon of Lamor: Fermor and the ſcout of night he left to defend them.

We brought Sulmina over the waves in Ronnan's ſhip; and here we raiſed, amid ſighs, her gray ſtone. Here too reſts the youthful Ronnan, whoſe arm was once ſo ſtrong, whoſe form was once ſo fair. His days were ſad and few, on the hill; he did not long ſurvive his beloved. Under that moſs-clad ſtone he was laid, where grows the ruſtling graſs. He reſts beſide his Sulmina. One lone thiſtle bends between their two gray ſtones its head, and ſheds on either ſide its aged beard. Often when I ſit here to the glimmering light of the moon, I ſee the faint forms of the two on its watery beams. I take my harp, and ſing their praiſe. Glad, they depart on the wing of winds.

Why art thou ſo ſilent, ſon of Arar, when the children of fame are around thee?

THE DEATH OF ARTHO*:

A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

ARDAR, lamenting the loſs of his ſon Calmar, is informed of the death of his other ſon Artho, as he looked for his return from battle. The ſon of Arman comforts him by relating to him the gallant behaviour of his ſon. He informs him alſo of his own paſſion for Colval, who had been in love with Artho.—Her death is related; with the deſpair of Artho: and the poem concludes with ſome reflections of Ardar upon their fate, and upon his own ſituation.

SAD are my thoughts while alone! Thy memory comes, with all its grief, on my ſoul; Calmar, chief of heroes. Thou wert a ſun-beam to thy friends in peace; a flaſh of lightning to thy foes in war. My ſon ruſhed, like a whirlwind, to the battle: many a young oak has been ſtrewed in his troubled path. The return of his renown was like the ſun when it ſets. The heart of the aged, over him, was glad; I bleſſed the mighty in battle.

* This poem, which goes under the name of *Bas Airt 'ic Ardair*, or *Tuire' an Aoſda*, appears to be the work of ſome ancient, but unknown, bard. Poſſibly it might have been compoſed by Ardar himſelf. At leaſt no other poet appears throughout the piece; in which circumſtance it differs from all the preceding poems. It begins with the following lines.

'S cianail m' aigne 's mi 'm aonar,
Calmar ag ciridh am ſmuainte;
'S a' liona mo chroidhe le mulad,
O nach faic mi tuille mo dhea' mhac.
Bu choſail e'n ſioth ri gatha greine,
'S am boſle-chatha ri teine ſpeuran;
Bu lionar gallan anns na roidibh,
'S e ruith mar ioma ghaoth ſios gu co'rag.
Bhiodh a phille' mar ghrian air faire,
'S an t aoſda le gean cuir failt air.

BUT, Calmar! thou art now no more; and the ſun that ſhone in the houſe of thy father is ſet. Fuardo was a ſtorm that ſeized my early ſun; in one morning he extinguiſhed all his beams. Darkneſs, ſince that day, dwells in Ardlia; for Artho is but a faint ſtar, beſide the light of his brother. Yet thou, my ſon, art alſo brave. But ah! thy arm may fail in the firſt of thy battles; for thy father cannot defend thee. I attempt to lift the ſpear, but I fall to earth when it does not ſupport me. I attempt to lift the ſhield, but my knees tremble under its burden. O that I ſaw my only ſon return, in the midſt of his renown, from battle!

BUT who comes in the beauty of youth, and ſtately as an oak of the mountain? His fair locks, like leaves, are waving around him. He is of the race of Arman, from the battle of the ſpears he comes.—Hail, thou beam of youth! whence are thy wandering ſteps? Art thou from the battle of heroes? Say, does Artho live; does he return to his gray-haired father? But why ſhould I aſk? thy mournful looks tell that he is now no more. Soon haſt thou left me, my ſon, in darkneſs; Artho, ſhall I no more behold thee? —Calmar is gone; Artho is low: O that I too had been with my children! In the evening of life I am left without a ſon; like a blaſted oak that is left alone on Malmor. The breeze ſhall deſcend from the mountain, and the blaſt ſhall blow from the deſart; but no green leaf of mine ſhall either meet. The ſhowers of the ſpring ſhall come, but no bough of mine ſhall flouriſh; the ſun ſhall ſmile through the drops of dew, but no green branch of mine ſhall behold it. The wind whiſtles in my gray moſſy head; its voice is, "Thou ſhalt ſoon be low."—One comfort is all I expect before then; tell me, ſon of youth, how fell my ſon?

"WITH-

" WITHOUT his fame thy ſon did not fall in battle; the mighty marked, with wonder, his courſe, as he ſtrode in the midſt of foes. Like the thunder that breaks the groves; like the lightning that lays low their green heads, when ſudden burſting it ſpreads terror, and again returns; ſo fought, ſo fell thy hero. The foes were troubled at the ſight of Artho; they fled, they fell. Death from the hand of Artho roared behind them, like the rolling of a rock from Malmor, when it cruſhes the trees in its courſe, till it ſinks in the lake below them. Such were thy deeds, ſon of fame! But the arrow of death came in the blaſt; and the people are ſad, for mighty was he that is low."

PLEASANT to me is thy tale, ſon of Arman; it is like the beam that diſpels the clouds of night. Thou haſt fought like thy fathers in their battles of youth, O Artho! and thy name, like theirs, ſhall be found in the ſong. When the valiant fall, a ſtreak of light behind them is their fame; their friends behold the beam, and are glad. But the feeble die, and are remembered no more; their friends are beheld with ſcorn by mighty men. They walk in the ſilent valley alone, and ſhun the eye of heroes.

BUT, ſon of Arman, why that ſigh; why theſe wandering looks? Haſt thou loſt a brother of love; or is thy ſoul troubled for the ſpouſe of thy youth!

NOR have I loſt a brother of love; nor have I a ſpouſe that longs for my return from the battle. My ſighs are for the fair of Carnmor; for her my wandering looks. My thoughts are of her in the day; of her are my dreams in the night.—But her ſoul is full of Artho. She ſaw the youth move to battle, and ſad was her troubled ſoul. She came to that hill, and followed him far with

with her looks. Her mournful eye was wet, and her ſighs were heard by ſecret ſtreams. " On this cold rock," ſhe ſaid, " I will ſit, till Artho of love return."---I am come to meet the ſun-beam of my ſoul. But the rock is dark; no beam of light is nigh it. The rock without Colval is dark; but darker ſtill is my ſoul with all its grief, for I ſee not the ſteps of my love. I ſee not her that was fairer than the down of the mountain, or the new-fallen ſnow on the waving tree *.—But who comes from Malmor with diſordered looks?---It is ſhe—it is my love: but ah! how changed! Pale is her cheek, and wild her look; ſhe has heard that her beloved is low. But hark! ſhe ſpeaks.

COLVAL.

WHAT detains thee, O Artho! ere now thou didſt promiſe to return. Ill-boding thoughts diſtract my ſoul. Shouldſt thou fall, my love, can I ſurvive thee, and wander on dark mountains lonely?—No: tear the ivy from the oak, tear the eagle from her dun-robed prey, and tear the offſpring from its parent of love; but tear not my ſoul from Artho.—But who is it I ſee? Is it my love returning from the battle? Ah! no; it is the ſon of Arman.---Trouble me not, O Farno; I cannot love thee. What haſt thou done with Artho? Will my love return no more; is he low in the ſtrife of ſteel? Yes, he is low; I ſee his robe in the paſſing miſt. ---Leave me not, O Artho; leave not thy love; for ſhe too comes on her cloud. Not hills with all their deer, not moſſy ſtreams with all their roes, can give joy to Colval when thou art gone. Artho, I come; O leave me not, my love!

FARNO.

* Two lines in the original of this paſſage are ſo beautiful, that they frequently enter into deſcriptions of female beauty:

Bu ghile bian na canach ſleibhe,
No ur-ſhneachd air bharra gheuga.

FARNO.

AH! ſhe falls; ſhe faints; ſhe dies away.—And art thou gone, faireſt of maids? In thee alone did my ſoul delight, though thy heart was fixed on Artho. Thou art gone, and what charms has life to me? No, farewel to all the delights of youth; farewel to all the joys of life. Farewel, ye hills of Carnmor*! and farewel, ye moſſy towers of Ardlia: Colval is gone, and pleaſure is no more to

* So great was the attachment of the ancient Caledonians to their hills, which ſupplied them with the means of ſubſiſtence at ſo eaſy a rate, that we often find them not only taking a ſolemn farewel of them at death, but alſo imagining that a part of their future happineſs conſiſted in ſeeing and travelling over thoſe ſcenes which in life afforded them ſo much pleaſure. Of this, the following extract from a ſmall poem, called *Miann a Bhaird*, affords a beautiful inſtance.

—"But hark! I hear the ſteps of the hunter. O may the cry of thy hounds, and the ſound of thy darts, thou bender of the yew, be often heard around my ſilent dwelling! My wonted joy, when the chaſe aroſe, ſhall then return, and the bloom of youth ſhall glow in my cheek that was faded.---The marrow in my bones ſhall revive, when I ſhall hear the ſound of ſpears, the bound of dogs, and the twang of ſtrings.—With joy I ſhall ſpring up alive, when they cry 'The ſtag is fallen!'

"I ſhall then meet the companion of my chaſe; the hound that followed me late and early. I ſhall ſee the hills that I loved to frequent, and the rocks that were wont to anſwer to my cries. I ſhall ſee the cave that often received my ſteps from night; the cave where we often rejoiced around the flame of the oak. There our feaſt of deer was ſpread; there Treig was our drink, and the murmur of its ſtreams our ſong. Ghoſts ſhrieked on their clouds, and the ſpirits of the mountain roared along their hollow ſtreams: but no fear was ours; in the cave of our rock ſecure we lay.—I ſhall ſee Scur-elda tower above the vale, where the welcome voice of the cuckow is early heard.---I ſhall ſee Gormal, with its thouſand pines; I ſhall ſee it in all its green beauty, with its many roes and flights of fowl.---I ſhall ſee the iſle of trees in the lake, with the red fruit nodding over the waves.---I ſhall ſee Ardven, chief of a thouſand hills: its ſides are the abode of deer; its top the habitation of clouds. ---I ſee---but whither, gay viſion, art thou fled?---Thou haſt left me, to return no more.

"Farewel then, my beloved hills; farewel, children of youth. With you it is ſummer ſtill: but my winter is come; no ſpring, alas, is to ſucceed!

---"O place me by the green ſide of my ſtream;

to me. I ruſh back to the field of death, and open my breaſt to ſome feeble ſteel. Then Colval I ſhall ſee again.

ARDAR.

BLESSED may you be, children of youth! lovely were your ſouls; but why ſo ſoon departed? Happy the young who die in the days of their joy. They feel not the burden of years; they ſee not the days of trouble: Days in which the ſun on the mountains is dim; and dark years creep ſlowly on the heath of mourning. Slow rolls the tide of years to me, O my fathers! Why do I wander on Ardlia when my race hath failed? Come, ye fathers of Ardar! convey me to the place where the ſons of my love repoſe. ---Is that your voice I hear in the breeze?—Yes, and I go in the ruſtling of your courſe: in the fold of your wandering blaſt I go. There Artho and Calmar I ſhall ſee again; and ſad and alone I ſhall be no more.

ſtream; place the ſhell, and my father's ſhield, beſide me in my narrow houſe.--- Open, open, ye ghoſts of my fathers! the hall where Oſſian and Daöl reſt. The evening of my life is come, and the bard ſhall no more be found in his place!"

FINIS.

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